

Anti-Bullying Policy

Belonging, Believing, Building a Future

It is our mission for everyone to experience the joy of God's love in their lives as part of St Peter's family through trust and friendships. We aim for everyone to be nurtured and to grow in peace, hope and understanding of God, themselves and one another in order to achieve and live fulfilled lives.

"May the God of hope fill you with all joy and peace in believing, so that you overflow with hope by the power of the Holy Spirit" (*Romans 15:13*)

This policy was developed in consultation with staff, governors, children and parents. It is reviewed and updated every two years, and the new version published on the school's website: www.st-peters-inf.oxon.sch.uk

Definition

This is our school community's shared understanding of what bullying is.

"When a person's or group of people's behaviour, over a period of time, leaves someone feeling one or more of the following:

- physically and/or mentally hurt or worried
- unsafe and/or frightened
- unable to do well and achieve
- "badly different", alone, unimportant and/or undervalued
- unable to see a happy and exciting future for yourself

it **could** be bullying. When a person, or group of people, has been made aware of the effects of their behaviour on another person and they continue to behave in the same manner, this **is** bullying."

If someone is made to feel like this, or if they think someone they knows feels like this, it should be investigated. This should happen straight away as it can take a long time to build up the courage to tell someone. However, lots of things can make people feel bad, sometimes it depends on the situation we are in, and it is not always bullying – so the following two definitions are also useful:

1. Bullying is any behaviour by an individual or group that:
 - is meant to hurt – the person or people doing the bullying know what they are doing and mean to do it
 - happens more than once – there will be a pattern of behaviour, not just a "one-off" incident
 - involves an imbalance of power – the person being bullied will usually find it very hard to defend themselves¹
2. "Behaviour by an individual or a group, usually repeated over time, that intentionally hurts another individual either physically or emotionally"².

¹ Adapted from Bullying – A Charter for Action, DCSF

² Adapted from DfE guidance "Preventing and Tackling Bullying" 2012

Methods and Practices of bullying

The following are some examples of the many different forms of bullying, but do this is not an exhaustive list.

Physical - For example, kicking, hitting, spitting, pushing, taking and damaging belongings, or threatening to do any of these things

Verbal - For example name calling, taunting, threats, offensive or discriminatory remarks, whether about people or objects

Indirect, emotional or relational - For example, spreading hurtful and untruthful rumours or nasty stories, gossiping, excluding from social groups, forcing someone to do something against their will, tormenting, “dirty looks”, or producing offensive graffiti

Prejudice-related - For example, bullying or harassment that is homophobic, gender based, sexist, sexual or transphobic, racist or discriminating against religion, Special Educational Needs, disabilities, health conditions or a person’s home circumstances, such as being looked after, or caring for a family member. This includes actions or language that discriminates against people for any of these reasons, or other reasons relating to a person’s identity.

Bullying includes the above but is not limited to this. It also includes:

- Any form of behaviour which is the result of a specific strategy to make an individual feel miserable
- Organising others to do any of the above
- Excluding an individual in such a way that they are made to feel vulnerable and different in a bad way

At St Peter’s, we reject all of the above forms of bullying and will not tolerate them in our school community.

Off-site bullying

We are aware that several areas in and around the school are vulnerable to bullying, including:

- outside (the field in particular)
- in the toilets
- in the corridor / cloakroom areas
- walking to and from school

The school has an enduring interest in the welfare and conduct of its children and will respond positively to any information it receives about bullying outside school, for example after school, in the play park, or in after-school clubs or activities.

The Education and Inspections Act 2006 gives Headteachers the power

“to such an extent as is reasonable to regulate the behaviour of pupils when they are off the school site.”

The school will intervene if it hears of off-site bullying.

To help prevent and reduce bullying off-site, the school will:

- Talk to the Headteachers of other schools whose children may be involved in bullying off the premises;
- Discuss coping and preventative strategies with parents
- Educate pupils about how to handle or avoid bullying outside the school premises
- Link with local service providers to share knowledge and best practice

If the school is aware of a bullying incident outside school, staff will:

- Follow the attached checklist for dealing with an incident as far as possible, depending on the situation, including recording and reporting protocols, and contacting parents / carers
- Provide support and advice to the person being bullied, if they are within our school

- Support and work with the person bullying, if they are within our school
- Inform any other relevant schools or agencies about the concerns and any actions taken
- If information is received that a child is being bullied by a sibling outside school this will initially be discussed with the parents.
- If children are being bullied by pupils of another school the headteacher of that school will be informed and invited to deal with the matter.

Discriminatory Language

Discriminatory language not only undermines confidence and self-esteem of individuals, but reflects negative attitudes towards a wider sub-community or group, and in some cases is illegal. A culture where discriminatory language goes unchallenged is likely to be a culture where bullying is more prevalent.

Discriminatory language of any kind is not acceptable and will be challenged, whether verbal or written (including graffiti). Education about diversity will be delivered through the curriculum, displays, assemblies and tolerance will be modelled by all staff. In particular we will not accept any derogatory language that is:

- Sexual or sexist
- Relating to special educational needs, disabilities or health conditions
- Gender based
- Homophobic
- Transphobic
- Racist
- Relating to religion
- Classist
- Relating to a person's home circumstances

Discriminatory language is sometimes used without thinking and may be ignored because either people feel it is difficult to know how to respond or they believe the language is used without any discriminatory intent. In this school we challenge all discriminatory language whenever it is used. When responding to discriminatory language, staff will:

- Tell the pupil that discriminatory language is not acceptable in school. Explain that such language is offensive.
- If pupils continue to use the language, explain in more detail the effect that discrimination and discriminatory language have on people and that like racist language, homophobic language will not be tolerated.
- If a pupil continues, remove the pupil from the classroom and talk to the pupil in more detail about his/her behaviour and why it's offensive.

If it still continues, the headteacher or senior teacher. The child should understand the sanctions that will apply if they continue to use discriminatory language. Alongside sanctions we may use a restorative approach to help repair the harm caused by the incident and help children be aware of the impact of their actions. These sanctions may include:

- Removal from the group (in class)
- Withdrawal of break and lunchtime privileges
- Withholding participation in any school trip or sports events that are not an essential part of the curriculum
- Official warning to cease
- Minor fixed-term exclusion
- Major fixed term exclusion
- Permanent exclusion

How bullying incidents will be dealt with

Bullying will be investigated and dealt with quickly, sensitively, fairly and firmly, using the annexed checklist. Children can report bullying to any member of staff, in the knowledge that it will be taken seriously and dealt with effectively. If a member of staff feels that they are being bullied, they should report it to their line manager or the Headteacher. Bullying of staff will be dealt with in accordance with Oxfordshire County Council guidelines.

Strategies to support those bullied and bullying

The following strategies are in place to support children and staff who have been bullied:

- Offering an immediate opportunity to discuss the experience with a member of staff of their choice
- Providing reassurance that the bullying will be addressed
- Offering continuous support such as counselling and training to develop self-esteem, assertiveness and confidence
- The use of specialist interventions and/or referrals to other agencies e.g. educational psychologist, SAFE! Support for young people affected by crime, where appropriate
- A “safe place” can be made available, e.g. a classroom, the library, or an office
- A named person of the affected person’s choice who can be ‘instantly’ available for one-to-one support within a confidential relationship
- The opportunity to meet with the person bullying meeting, if appropriate

The following strategies are in place to support and work with children who have been bullying:

- Discussing what happened with a member of staff, including an exploration of how and why the child became involved, and what they need to resolve the situation
- Providing reassurance that their needs will be addressed
- Offering continuous support such as counselling and training to develop self-esteem, empathy, assertiveness and confidence
- The use of specialist interventions and/or referrals to other agencies e.g. educational psychologist, SAFE! Support for young people affected by crime, where appropriate
- A “safe place” can be made available, e.g. a classroom, the Library, or an office
- A named person of the affected person’s choice who can be ‘instantly’ available for one-to-one support within a confidential relationship
- The opportunity to meet with the person bullied for a meeting if appropriate

In addition peer support schemes can be used to provide follow up support to either party, such as:

- Circle time activities
- Peer Support
- Group work amongst peers, led by staff to tackle underlying issues

Preventative strategies

Monitoring and Review

The school regularly monitors levels of bullying through the following measures:

- Follow up after each incident to review effectiveness of response
- Systematic recording and review of incident forms to inform policy and procedures

This policy is reviewed and updated in response to intelligence gathered in the above ways, for example to target measures towards particularly vulnerable groups.

Spotting bullying early

A child may indicate by signs or behaviour that he or she is being bullied. To those who know the child this may simply be a feeling that 'things aren't quite right'. Staff are trained to be aware of these possible signs and will investigate if a child:

- Is frightened of walking to or from school
- Begs to be driven to school
- Changes their usual routine
- Is unwilling to go to school
- Becomes withdrawn, anxious, or lacking in confidence
- Starts stammering
- Cries themselves to sleep at night or has nightmares
- Feels ill in the morning
- Comes home with clothes torn or books damaged
- Has possessions which are damaged or "go missing"
- Asks for money or starts stealing money (to pay person who is bullying)
- 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
- Gives improbable excuses for any of the above
- Becomes withdrawn and is reluctant to say why
- Reduces their educational attainment
- Perceives comments from others as hurtful
- Displays challenging behaviour, which could be the result of intimidation or enforced isolation from others

These signs and behaviours could indicate other problems, but bullying should be considered a possibility and should be investigated.

Education and information

Education and awareness-raising about diversity, discrimination and bullying is delivered through:

- The curriculum (Circle time, projects, SEAL, PHSE, Citizenship lessons), where issues surrounding bullying and any ideas to make situations better can be discussed, for example exploring:
 - Diversity, tolerance and discrimination
 - Why do people bully each other?
 - What are the effects of bullying on the bullied, on bullies, and on bystanders?
 - What can we do to stop bullying?
 - How children can constructively to manage their relationships with others
- Assemblies where children will be informed of the school's zero-tolerance policy and the actions that will be taken to prevent bullying taking place.
- Making national anti-bullying week a high profile event each year;
- Drama—can be part of a drama lesson, with role play a powerful vehicle. to help children be more assertive and teach them strategies to help them deal with bullying situations;
- IT lessons covering e-safety and cyberbullying
- Adults model appropriate behaviour towards each other to children
- This policy is displayed on the parent notice board, and is available on the school's website
- Involving the whole school community in writing and reviewing the policy;

Other Prevention Strategies

- Each class agreeing on their own set of class rules

- Introducing playground improvements and initiatives
- School councillors acting as 'buddies'
- Using praise and rewards to reinforce good behaviour, such as certificates at Celebration Assembly
- Encouraging the whole school community to model appropriate behaviour towards one another
- Staff will constantly reinforce the message to children that bullying is unacceptable and will take positive action to prevent and control it
- Children who are felt to be at risk of bullying (or who have suffered from bullying in the past) will be offered additional support and guidance
- Extra supervision available to reduce the risk of bullying incidents at particularly vulnerable times such as lunch and break times and the beginning and end of the school day; and in particularly vulnerable areas around school
- Children will be encouraged to talk to staff about incidents of bullying which they experience or of which they may be aware
- The Student Council meets regularly and can represent children concerns and pass them onto staff.
- An Equality Policy is in operation in the school, covering what is meant by racial, homophobic, disablist, classist, gender-based, sexual, transphobic, religious or other identity-based harassment. It states that such harassment will not be tolerated, and specifies how the school will respond to any such incidents
- Staff use restorative approaches to help resolve issues where appropriate

All staff, including support and administrative staff are trained to deal with issues relating to bullying and violence.

Where Childs and Parents / Carers can find more information

Parents / carers: Parents / carers can contact the headteacher or assistant headteacher if they suspect bullying is going on. If they are unhappy with the way it is dealt with, or wish to make a complaint, they can contact the Chair of Governors. Comments from parents / carers will be welcomed and it is expected that all parents/carers will support the school in maintaining these standards.