

ANTI-BULLYING POLICY



St. James' Church of England Primary Academy

Approved By: Local Governing Body

Date: June 2025

Next Review Date: June 2027



ANTI-BULLYING POLICY

All our policies are written with the objective of continuously improving our school in our aim of realising St. James' vision, which is to create a community that reaches their full potential:

"He told them another parable: "The kingdom of heaven is like a mustard seed, which a man took and planted in his field. ³² Though it is the smallest of all seeds, yet when it grows, it is the largest of garden plants and becomes a tree, so that the birds come and perch in its branches."

Matthew 13: 31-32

We believe a small act of kindness and an act of faith can have a huge impact on another's life.

Our Governors, leaders and staff uphold the vision of

'We grow together, through God we are Giving, Loving and are Honest'

At St. James' Church of England Primary Academy we are committed to providing a warm, caring and safe environment for all our children so that they can learn and play in a relaxed and secure environment within our Christian Ethos. Bullying of any kind is unacceptable and will not be tolerated in our school. We take all incidents of bullying seriously.

We aim to make all those connected with St. James' aware of our opposition to bullying and we make clear each person's responsibilities with regard to the prevention of bullying in our school. Everybody within our school has the right to feel safe, valued, protected and to be treated with respect and pupils who are bullying others need to learn different ways of behaving.

The Aims and Objectives of this Policy

- St. James' will meet the legal requirement to have an Anti-Bullying Policy in place.
- The Academy will work closely with other professional agencies to ensure that children stay safe, whilst seeking to learn from good anti-bullying practice elsewhere and utilise support from relevant organisations and Medway Authority
- All Governors, teaching and non-teaching staff will know what the school policy is on bullying and will consistently and swiftly follow it when bullying is reported.
- All pupils and parents/guardians will know what the school policy is on bullying and what they can do if bullying occurs.
- Pupils and parents/guardians will be assured that they will be supported when bullying is reported.
- Whole-school initiatives (staff training, celebration assemblies and worship etc.) and proactive teaching strategies will be used throughout the school to reduce the opportunities for bullying to occur.
- Report back to parents/carers regarding their concerns on bullying and deal promptly with complaints. Parents/carers in turn work with the Academy to uphold the Anti-bullying Policy.
- A positive, caring ethos will be created within the school environment where everyone can work, play and express themselves, free from the fear of being bullied.

What is Bullying?

The school has adopted the following collaborative definition of bullying which is our shared understanding of what bullying is:

Bullying is any deliberate, hurtful, upsetting, frightening or threatening behaviour by an individual or a group towards other people. It is repeated over a period of time and it is very difficult for the victims to defend themselves (remember STOP – it happens Several Times on Purpose). Bullying is mean and results in worry, fear, pain and distress to the victims.

Bullying can be:

- Emotional being unfriendly, excluding, tormenting (e.g. hiding books, threatening gestures), ridicule and humiliation.
- Verbal name-calling, sarcasm, spreading rumours, threats, teasing, making rude remarks, making fun of someone.
- Physical pushing, kicking, hitting, pinching, throwing stones, biting, spitting, punching or any other forms of violence, taking or hiding someone's belongings.
- Racist taunts, graffiti, gestures, making fun of culture and religion.
- Sexual unwanted physical contact or sexually abusive or sexist comments.
- Homophobic taunts.
- Online/cyber setting up 'hate websites', sending offensive text messages, emails and abusing the victims via their mobile phones or computer.
- Any unfavourable or negative comments, gestures or actions made to someone relating to their disability or special educational needs.

Bullying is not:

It is important to understand that bullying is not the odd occasion of falling out with friends, name calling, arguments or when the occasional trick or joke is played on someone. It is bullying if it is done several times on purpose (STOP).

Children 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 children'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.

What can you do if you are being bullied?

Whenever you are in school you have the right to feel safe, nobody has the right to make you feel unhappy. If someone is bullying you, it is important to remember that it is not your fault and there are people who can help you.

The children were all asked this question and we have included some of their strategies in the list below:

- ✓ Always tell someone.
- ✓ Try not to let the bully know that he or she is making you feel upset.
- ✓ Try to ignore them and walk away.
- ✓ Be assertive - stand up to them, look at directly in the eye, tell them to stop and mean it.
- ✓ Stay in a group, bullies usually pick on individuals.
- ✓ Tell someone you can trust – it can be a teacher, teaching assistant, midday meals supervisor, a parent, a friend, a brother, a sister or a member of the School Council.
- ✓ If you are scared, ask a friend to go with you when you tell someone.
- ✓ If you don't feel you can talk to someone about it then write it down and post it in the Worry Box.
- ✓ When you tell an adult about the bullying give them as many facts as you can (What? When? Who? Where? Why? And How?)
- ✓ Keep on speaking out until someone listens and helps you.
- ✓ Never be afraid to do something about it and quick.
- ✓ Don't suffer in silence.

- ✓ Don't blame yourself for what is happening.
- ✓ Call a helpline.

What can children do if they know someone is being bullied?

Ignoring bullying is cowardly and unfair to the victim. Staying silent means that the bully has won and gives the more power. There are ways you can help without putting yourself in danger.

- ✓ Take action! Watching and doing nothing looks as if they are on the side of the bully.
- ✓ If safe to do so, let the bully know that their behaviour is unacceptable.
- ✓ Tell a member of staff as soon as you can.
- ✓ Encourage the person to talk to someone and get help.
- ✓ Try and befriend the person being bullied.
- ✓ If they feel they cannot get involved, they should tell an adult immediately.
- ✓ Teachers will deal with the bully without getting them into trouble.
- ✓ Do not be, or pretend to be, friends with a bully.

Bullying of children with Special Educational Needs

St. James' is an inclusive school. We provide a secure, accepting, safe and stimulating environment where everyone is valued for who they are.

We have some children who have physical disabilities and some who have learning disabilities and/or communication difficulties. Everyone involved in the school is very aware that these children can be especially vulnerable to bullying and we are therefore particularly vigilant at all times.

High attainers, gifted or talented pupils can also be affected by bullying. Staff will treat this type of bullying as seriously and in the same way as any other type of bullying.

Procedures for reporting and responding to bullying incidents

All staff will respond calmly and consistently to all allegations and incidents of bullying at St. James'. They will be taken seriously by all staff and will be dealt with impartially and promptly. All those involved will have the opportunity to be heard. Staff will protect and support all children involved whilst allegations and incidents are investigated and resolved.

The following step-by-step procedure will be used for reporting and responding to bullying allegations or incidents:

1. Report all bullying allegations and incidents to staff.
2. Staff will make sure the victim is and feels safe.
3. Staff will listen and speak to all children involved about the incident separately.
4. The problem will be identified and possible solutions suggested.
5. Appropriate action will be taken quickly to end the bullying behaviour or threats of bullying.
6. Staff will reinforce to the bully that their behaviour is unacceptable and will not be tolerated at St. James'.
7. The bully may be asked to genuinely apologise, as appropriate to the child's age and level of understanding. Other consequences may take place and appropriate sanctions applied.
8. If possible, the pupils will be reconciled.
9. An attempt will be made, and support given, to help the bully understand and change his/her behaviour.
10. Paperwork will be kept in the behaviour folder in the Headteacher's office.

11. In serious cases parents will be informed and will be invited to come into school for a meeting to discuss the problem.
12. After the incident has been investigated and dealt with, each case will be monitored to ensure repeated bullying does not take place.
13. Bullying incidents will be discussed regularly at staff meetings.
14. The Headteacher will present termly reports on serious bullying incidents to the Governors.
15. If necessary and appropriate, Social Services or Police will be consulted.

Sanctions from the Behaviour Policy may be used:

- Report to the Headteacher or Assistant Headteacher
- Apologise to the victim verbally or in writing
- Lose privileges
- Lose playtimes
- Spend playtimes and lunchtimes with an adult
- Parents invited in to school
- Removal from class and complete work in isolation
- Be withdrawn from participation in school visits, clubs and events not essential to the curriculum
- Fixed term exclusion
- Permanent exclusion.

Action to be taken to support the victim:

- Environmental changes will be made if necessary: classroom, playground to ensure that child feels more secure.
- Staff must communicate with other staff and record, where relevant, any incidents or concerns.
- The situation will continue to be monitored by all staff to ensure no repetition. Children will be observed at break times, lunchtimes and in the classroom. Any follow-up findings will be recorded in the monitoring section of the school Incident Log.
- Key friends identified by the child will be asked for extra support.
- The child may attend a nurture group.
- The child will nominate an adult in school whom they trust and feel they can talk to.
- The child will be made aware of the importance of immediate reporting of any further incidents.
- Parents may be invited into school so that action taken can be shared.
- The HSSW and class teacher will work together to assess whether the child needs support in the development of social skills – assertiveness, language skills.

Action to be taken to support the bully:

Type and method of support will depend on individual needs, age and maturity of the child.

- It may be suggested that the children involved meet with the support of their class teachers.
- It will be made clear to the child that their behaviour is unacceptable because of the effect that it is having on the other child.
- The child may be asked what they hoped to gain by their behaviour – if their answer indicates that a need is not being met, then this may be addressed through discussion with parents.

- The child will be reminded that they are responsible for their behaviour and there are consequences for poor behaviour.
- Following the implementation of a behaviour plan, if the behaviour persists, then outside agency support may be requested to address the needs of the child, with the permission of parents.
- The child may attend a nurture group.

Responsibilities

This policy only works if it ensures that the whole school community understands that bullying is not tolerated and understands the steps that will be taken to both prevent and respond to bullying.

It is the responsibility of:

- Governors to take a lead role in monitoring and reviewing this policy.
- Governors, Headteacher, senior leaders, teaching and non-teaching staff to be aware of this policy and implement it accordingly.
- The Headteacher to communicate the policy to the school community.
- Pupils to abide by the policy.

Monitoring and Review

The Headteacher will report on a regular basis to the Governing Body on incidents of bullying and outcomes. St James' will ensure that they regularly monitor and evaluate mechanisms to ensure that the policy is being consistently applied. Any issues identified will be incorporated into the School's action planning.

Appendix 1 – Legal Framework

Since September 1999 all schools have been required to have an Anti-Bullying Policy in place.

All agencies working with children and young people (including schools and colleges) must have regard to the need to safeguard and promote the welfare of children, helping them to 'stay safe' from bullying and discrimination (Children Act 2004).

Human Rights Act 1998

Amongst other articles, this act prohibits torture, inhuman and degrading treatment and states that all citizens must have access to their rights with discrimination.

Race Relations Act 2000

Brought in a positive duty on all public bodies to eliminate racial discrimination and to promote equality of opportunity and good relations between persons of different racial groups.

Employment Equality (Religion or Belief) Regulations 2003

Outlaws discrimination in employment and vocational training on the groups of religion or belief.

Employment Equality (Sexual Orientation) Regulations 2003

Outlaws discrimination in employment and vocational training on the grounds of sexual orientation.

Disability Equality Duty 2006

Brought in a positive duty on all public bodies to eliminate discrimination and promote equality of opportunity for disabled people.

Gender Equality Duty 2007

Brought in a positive duty on all public bodies to eliminate sexual discrimination and promote equality of opportunity and good relations between men and women.

Equality Act (Sexual Orientation) Regulations 2007

Outlawed discrimination on the grounds of sexual orientation in the provision of goods and services.

There are some cases when bullying stops being bullying and becomes a crime. Serious physical assaults, sexual assaults, racist or homophobic abuse for example can all be criminal activity, under the Harassment Act 1997 or the Offences Against the Person Act 1861 for example.