

# ANTI-BULLYING POLICY AND PROCEDURES

***This policy should be understood in the context of the Child Protection Policy, Code of Conduct and Behaviour Policy which are available on the school website.***

This policy supports our school aim, 'To promote high standards of personal behaviour and the development of moral and spiritual values' as well as our school Value of 'Compassion' and the Gospel Values which are at the heart of St Teresa's.

There is a high expectation that the school and the wider community at St Teresa's will fully support this policy; that all members of the school will behave in a way that will allow for the full development of all individuals personally, socially and academically; that all will show tolerance and respect towards individuals and a responsibility towards the community as a whole.

Research tells us that what children fear most is bullying and bullying behaviour takes place in all schools. This school does not tolerate bullying and it is everyone's responsibility to see that incidents of bullying are dealt with immediately. All staff should be aware of what to look for, and staff and pupils should be familiar with the procedures to follow when incidents of bullying occur.

Bullying is unacceptable in this school and will not be tolerated. The school also recognises that it is important to be aware of bullying perpetrated outside school which spills over into the school. The school will do what is reasonably practicable to eliminate any such bullying.

## **Aims of the Policy**

- To ensure that all pupils and staff are able to learn/work in an environment where they feel safe and secure.
- To demonstrate that the school takes bullying seriously and will not be tolerated.
- To take measures to prevent all forms of bullying in the school and on off-site activities.
- To support everyone in the actions to identify and protect those who might be bullied.
- To demonstrate to all that the safety and happiness of pupils is enhanced by dealing positively with bullying.
- To promote an environment where it is **not** an offence to tell someone about bullying.
- To promote positive attitudes in pupils

## **Definition of Bullying**

We understand bullying to be behaviour by an individual or a group, that intentionally hurts another individual or group either physically or emotionally.

In bullying, there is a conscious desire to frighten, hurt or threaten. Bullying is deliberately harmful behaviour which may be persistently repeated over a period of time; however, it may also be a one-off incident. It can take many forms including:

- Teasing or name calling
- Verbal intimidation
- Malicious gossip
- Racial, homophobic, religious, sexual orientation, gender, cultural or sexual/sexist harassment, SEN/learning difficulties or disabilities, adopted or carer responsibilities
- Extortion
- Emotional abuse
- Ostracism – isolation of a pupil from a friendship or peer group
- Damaging or stealing the property of a victim
- Physical or sexual abuse
- Cyberbullying
- Intimidation through violence or isolating them physically or online
- Inappropriate text messaging and emailing
- Making or sending offensive or degrading images or videos by phone or via the internet, or posting these on social networking sites e.g. snapchat, Instagram

Bullying, both physical and emotional, can seriously damage a person's confidence and sense of self-worth and they will often feel that they are at fault in some way. It can lead to serious and prolonged psychological damage for an individual. Those who conduct the bullying or witness the bullying can also experience emotional harm and the negative impact on parents and school staff can be significant. Stopping violence and ensuring immediate physical safety is the school's first priority but emotional bullying can be more damaging.

Bullying can take place between pupils, between pupils and staff, or between staff; by individuals or groups; face-to-face, indirectly or by using a range of cyberbullying methods. This policy provides an overall framework for managing all types of bullying behaviour. There is no 'hierarchy' of bullying – all forms of bullying should be taken equally seriously and dealt with appropriately.

### **Cyberbullying**

Cyber bullying is perpetrated via a technological medium e.g. the internet or mobile device. It can be an extension of "face to face" bullying, with technology providing the bully with another route to harass the target. However, it differs in several ways from other kinds of bullying because of the invasion of home and personal space and the size of the audience. It can take a number of different forms:

- Threats and intimidation
- Harassment
- Cyber stalking e.g. repeatedly sending unwanted texts, defamation
- Exclusion or peer rejection
- Impersonation
- Circulation of private information or images and manipulation

Cyber bullying is deliberate and aggressive. Although it leaves no visible scars, cyber bullying is extremely destructive. What is more, bullies can reach a wider number within a peer group than they can with conventional bullying. Vindictive comments posted on the website, for instance, can be seen by a larger audience, as can video clips sent by mobile phones.

The school trains pupils, staff and parents in online safety as part of both safeguarding and anti-bullying arrangements and the importance of vigilance is stressed to staff and parents. The school actively manages hardware, software and connectivity and there is an Acceptable Use Policy which gives guidance on how technology should be used in the school setting.

### **Signs of Bullying**

We recognise that signs and effects of bullying may be:

- Anxiety about coming to school/truancy from lessons/unusual absences
- Changes in behaviour e.g. becoming shy and nervous, feigning illness
- Changes in eating habits
- Changes in interactions with peers or staff
- Loss of concentration or deteriorating school work
- Depression
- In the worst cases, attempted or completed suicide
- Unwillingness to discuss and share aspects of home life

### **Preventing Bullying**

What the school does to prevent bullying:

- Acts quickly when incidents are reported
- Supports all those involved
- Has a clear Behaviour Policy and Code of Conduct to create an environment of good behaviour and respect
- Trains all pupils to act when they see situations that are a cause for concern
- Trains staff to raise awareness of bullying and cyber-bullying
- Staff are expected to act as role models and to avoid sarcasm, making derogatory or humiliating comments to pupils
- Older pupils and prefects are explicitly expected to act as role models
- Records and monitors incidents to look for trends about where and when bullying takes place
- Supervise areas of the school at critical times
- Remind pupils of their right and responsibility to raise concerns
- Buddies and Peer Mentors are allocated at times of transition e.g. all new pupils or where pupils are experiencing difficulties
- Encourages pupils to discuss their views on school life at the School Council
- Raise awareness of bullying e.g. during assemblies or by participating in 'Anti-bullying Week'

- Bullying issues are addressed across the curriculum with discussion of differences between people, particularly in PSHCE and RE
- Staff and pupils understand the importance of avoiding prejudice based language
- The Prep School has a weekly Celebration of Achievement assembly and a Golden Book in which pupils are recognised and rewarded for good behaviour and living out Gospel Values
- The Senior School uses the Rewards system to recognise positive and supportive behaviour by pupils.

### **Reporting and Investigating Bullying**

We want everyone to feel safe to report bullying incidents. A pupil who is encountering problems, either as a bully or as a victim, is encouraged to talk about any such problems with those who can help e.g. their Form Teacher / Head of Year / School Nurse, or any other member of staff to whom the child feels comfortable talking.

They should be given honest advice on how to deal with their problem. Everyone can be sure of a supportive and sympathetic approach in line with the School's Values and ethos.

#### **In the Prep School:**

- The person who first receives the report from a pupil should inform the Form Teacher as soon as possible. She/he will then speak to the pupil and inform their Head of Lower/Upper Prep. In serious cases, where the child is deemed to be at risk, then information should be passed to the DSL (See Safeguarding Policy). The Form Teacher/Head of Lower/Upper Prep will gently question the pupil being bullied. Throughout the incident, the pupil being bullied must feel supported by staff and must feel that she was right to report the bullying.
- Wherever possible, intervention should be arranged in such a way that bullies can be discovered by staff and then dealt with. Once they know what they are looking for, staff can discover it for themselves and hence accusations of 'sneaking' are avoided.
- Due to the young age of children in the Prep School, parents will be contacted so that the school and home can work in partnership to resolve the issue.

#### **In the Senior School:**

- The person who first receives the report from a pupil should inform the Form Tutor as soon as possible. She / he will then speak to the pupil and inform their Head of Year. In serious cases, where the child is deemed to be at risk, then information should be passed to the DSL (See Safeguarding Policy).
- Teaching staff will be informed of any incident on a 'need to know' basis.
- The pupil or pupils allegedly doing the bullying will then be questioned individually by the appropriate member of staff.

A meeting, if appropriate, will be arranged between the pupil being bullied and the pupil/s doing the bullying in the presence of the investigating member of staff in order to bring the bullying into the open. The pupil/s who are bullying will be expected to make a full apology to the person bullied.

The pupil being bullied is able to find support from any member/s of staff with whom she /he has a good relationship.

Parents of all concerned will be contacted, given the facts and, if appropriate, invited to a meeting in school.

All bullying incidents will be logged on a spreadsheet by the Head of Lower/Upper Prep / Head of Year (Senior School) and Deputy Head (Pastoral, Senior School). These will be discussed at SLT meetings (Prep) or HoYs meetings once a term to enable patterns to be identified.

Sanctions will be given according to the Behaviour Policy and in serious incidents, or for persistent bullying, the sanction may be exclusion from school (please see Exclusion Policy, Prep School; Behaviour, Rewards & Sanctions policy, Senior School).

The school also recognises that changing the attitude and behaviour of bullies will be part of the responsibility of the positive procedures used by the school.

### **Monitoring and Review**

The Head (Prep) and the Deputy Head (Pastoral, Senior) will keep records of serious incidents. This is done via records of all incidents being given to them and/or recorded on a pastoral monitoring spreadsheet which is used to make the annual report to Governors. The pastoral monitoring spreadsheet/records enable the identification of any patterns of bullying. The spreadsheet/records are reviewed termly in hard copy. These incidents will be considered to determine what can be learned from the incidents and how they were handled, with a view to continually improving the school's strategies.

Updated: 20<sup>th</sup> September 2020 VLO PCA SCO

## Appendix A

### Anti-Bullying Advice for Pupils in Lower and Upper Prep

The following information should be conveyed to the girls by staff; in the first instance, by the Form Teacher.

Bullying is unacceptable behaviour. If you are being bullied or you suspect that someone is being bullied or in distress, take action by informing someone immediately. This could be:

- a friend in your class or an older girl – prefect/peer mentor/buddy/School Council member
- an older sister or brother
- your mother or father or another member of your family
- your Form Teacher or any other teacher
- the school Nurse
- the school Chaplain
- the Head or Deputy Head

The school has a procedure for dealing with such incidents to support you and resolve the problem. Both the victim and the bully will be given support and the Behaviour Policy applied. In extreme cases, suspension or permanent exclusion may occur.

Other things which can help the situation are:

- Keep calm, ignore the bully and don't let her see that you are hurt by her behaviour.
- Stay confident and behave in a friendly way towards the bully so that she has no reason to be aggressive
- Walk away before the bully has the chance to treat you badly

If you are willing to identify the person who has been bullying you, the school has a responsibility to make sure that this does not continue. The Head/Deputy Head will talk to the bully to find out why she is acting as she is and to ensure that she understands that her actions are unacceptable. The bully will be given every possible encouragement to change her ways of behaving.

The situation will be monitored to make sure that it does not happen again and that the bully does not retaliate. The bully will be given suitable sanctions.

If the bullying continues, the bully may be suspended from school and this suspension will become part of her permanent school record. In extreme cases, a girl may be asked to leave the school. Depending upon the nature of the event, parents may be informed at a very early stage.

## Appendix B

### Anti-Bullying Advice for Senior School

Bullying is unacceptable at St Teresa's and will not be tolerated. The school also recognises that it is important to be aware of bullying perpetrated outside school which spills over into the school. The school will do what is reasonably practicable to eliminate any such bullying.

#### **AIMS:**

- To demonstrate that the school takes bullying seriously and will not be tolerated.
- To take measures to prevent all forms of bullying in the school and on off-site activities.
- To support everyone in the actions to identify and protect those who might be bullied.
- To demonstrate to all that the safety and happiness of pupils is enhanced by dealing positively with bullying.
- To promote an environment where it is **not** an offence to tell someone about bullying.
- To promote positive attitudes in pupils

Bullying is defined as repeatedly and intentionally acting to hurt or frighten somebody else. It can take the form of racial, religious, cultural, sexual/sexist, homophobic, physical abuse (including threatening behaviour and extortion) and cyber bullying or be directed at those who are adopted or are a carer or have special educational needs and disabilities.

#### ***There are three types of bullying:***

Emotional - actively excluding pupils, tormenting, spreading rumours, gesturing

Physical - hitting, kicking, punching, taking or hiding belongings, damaging property

Verbal - name calling, teasing, insulting, writing unkind notes, threatening

#### ***Cyber Bullying***

This is perpetrated via a technological medium e.g. the internet or mobile phone. It can be an extension of "face to face" bullying, with technology providing the bully with another route to harass target. However, it differs in several ways from other kinds of bullying because of the *invasion of home and personal space and the size of the audience*. It takes different forms:

- Threats and intimidation
- Harassment
- Cyber stalking eg. repeatedly sending unwanted texts

- Exclusion or peer rejection
- Impersonation
- Circulation of private information or images

Cyber bullying is deliberate, aggressive and can be extremely destructive. It can reach a wider number within a peer group than conventional bullying. Vindictive comments posted on a website can be seen by a larger audience, as can video clips sent by mobile phones.

People who are bullied may lose their confidence and can be made to feel that it is their own fault that they are being bullied.

### **What should you do if you are bullied?**

Many people who are bullied make the mistake of keeping it to themselves. If you are being threatened or bullied, you must tell someone. This could be:

- a friend in your class or an older girl (prefect / peer mentor / buddy)
- Your parents or another member of your family.
- You're Form Tutor, Head of Year, Boarding staff or any other teacher.
- The Head or Deputy Head or Assistant Heads.

If anyone tells you that she is being bullied, you should report this to a member of staff; do not keep it to yourself.

Keep calm, ignore the bully and don't let her see that you are hurt by her behaviour. Stay confident and behave in a friendly way towards the bully so that she has no reason to be aggressive.

Walk away before the bully has the chance to treat you badly.

If you are willing to identify the person who has been bullying you, the school has a responsibility to make sure that this does not continue. The Deputy Head will talk to the bully to find out why she is acting as she is and to ensure that she understands that her actions are unacceptable. The bully will be given every possible encouragement to change her ways of behaving.

The situation will be monitored to make sure that it does not happen again and that the bully does not retaliate. The bully will be given suitable sanctions.

If the bullying continues, the bully may be suspended from school and this suspension will become part of her permanent school record. In extreme cases, a girl may be asked to leave the school.

Depending upon the nature of the event, parents may be informed at a very early stage.

**Useful website: [www.kidscape.org.uk](http://www.kidscape.org.uk) [www.childline.org.uk](http://www.childline.org.uk)**

**Names of people in school who may be able to help:**

My Form Tutor.....

My Head of Year.....

My Buddy.....

Amy Beney (Head Girl)

Stephanie Agha, Grace Gibbon and Isabelle Honey (Deputy Head Girl)

Sophie Louise McClean (Upper School Prefects)

Emily Conrad, Darcy Salussolia, Maddie Walsh (Lower School Prefects)

Evie Kerrigan Smith (Boarding Prefect)

Mrs V Low (Designated Safeguarding Lead)

Mrs P Cawley (Deputy Head Pastoral)

Mrs J Graham (Lead School Nurse)

*If you would like to speak to the school counsellor, please see the school nurses or email [counselling@st-teresas.com](mailto:counselling@st-teresas.com)*

## Appendix C

### Anti-Bullying Advice for Parents

St Teresa's has an Anti-Bullying Policy and several methods of dealing with bullying in school if it arises. A child is being bullied when s/he is exposed to negative actions on the part of one or more pupils.

Bullying can take many forms and can include the following:

- Name calling and teasing
- Threats and extortion
- Physical violence
- Damage to someone's belongings
- Leaving pupils out of social activities deliberately and frequently
- Spreading malicious rumours
- Bullying by mobile phone text messages, email or internet websites and social media sites

Parents and families have an important role to play in helping schools deal with bullying:

- Discourage your child from using bullying behaviour at home or elsewhere
- Show them how to resolve difficult situations at home or elsewhere
- Watch out for signs that your child is being bullied or is bullying others (parents and friends are often the first to detect that a problem exists). Don't dismiss it. Contact the school immediately if you are worried
- Monitor closely your child's use of the internet and mobile phone
- Ensure access to social networking sites are only used for children of the correct age and used appropriately (accounts are only permitted for those aged 13 plus)

#### **If your child has been bullied:**

- Calmly talk to your child about his/her experience.
- Make a note of what s/he says, particularly who was said to be involved; how often the bullying has occurred; where it happened and what happened.
- Reassure your child that s/he has done the right thing in telling you about the bullying.
- Explain to your child that should further incidents occur s/he should report them to a teacher / form tutor immediately.
- Make an appointment to contact your child's teacher / form tutor.

When talking to staff:

- Try to stay calm and understand that the teacher may have no idea that your child is being bullied or may have heard conflicting accounts of an incident.
- Be as specific as possible about what your child has said.
- Ask how you can help.
- Stay in touch with the school and let us know if things improve as well as if the problems continue.

**If your child is bullying other children:**

Children may be involved with bullying other pupils at some time. Often parents are not aware that their child is involved in bullying.

Sometimes children bully because:

- They do not know it is wrong
- They are copying older siblings or other people in the family whom they admire
- Their friends encourage them to bully
- They are going through a difficult time and are acting out their aggressive feelings on others

**To stop your child bullying:**

- Talk with your child; explain that what s/he is doing is unacceptable and makes other people unhappy.
- Discourage other members of your family from bullying behaviour or from using aggression or force to get what they want.
- Make an appointment to see your child's teacher / form tutor and discuss how you and the school can assist them in correcting the undesirable behaviour.
- Regularly check with your child how things are going at school.
- Give your child lots of praise and encouragement when s/he is co-operative and kind.
- Monitor use of mobile phones and the internet.

**Useful websites and organisations:**

- KIDSCAPE website [www.kidscape.org.uk](http://www.kidscape.org.uk)
- CHILDLINE website [www.childline.org.uk](http://www.childline.org.uk)
- Bullying Online [www.bullying.co.uk](http://www.bullying.co.uk)
- Kooth Online support for young people [www.kooth.com](http://www.kooth.com)
- Advisory Centre for Education (ACE) 0808 800 5793
- KIDSCAPE Parents Helpline (M-F 10-4) 0845 1205 204
- Parentline Plus 0808 800 2222
- Youth Access 0845 600 2516