



St Edward's School

Unity - Achievement - Faith

Anti-Bullying Policy

Reviewed and Approved by the Personal Development, Behaviour and Attitudes Committee

On: 26th November 2020

Reviewed and Ratified at the St Edward's Full Governing Body

On: 10th December 2020

Next review date: Autumn 2023

SLT are responsible for oversight of this policy's implementation

Mission Statement

MAY WE BE ONE

In purpose – educating for life in all its fullness

In faith – encountering God who lives among us, calling us to unity

In dignity – nurturing confidence and maturity

In community – striving together for justice, love and peace

St Edward's Mission statement of "May we be one" has clear ramifications for the school's approach to bullying. Bullying behaviour is harmful and divides people. The whole school community should therefore work together in order to challenge any bullying and ensure that St Edward's is a caring, friendly and safe environment for all of our students where they can learn in a positive and secure atmosphere. We believe that all members of our community should be treated with respect, and that bullying is never acceptable.

This policy aims to:

- support all members of our community in the development of high levels of self-esteem.
- ensure all members of the school community have a common understanding of what constitutes bullying.
- make clear the roles and responsibilities held by different groups and individuals.
- outline the ways in which bullying should be reported.
- summarise the statutory duties of the school.

What is Bullying?

The Anti-Bullying Alliance defines bullying as 'the **repetitive, intentional hurting** of one person or group by another person or group, where the relationship involves an **imbalance of power**. Bullying can be physical, verbal or psychological. It can happen face-to-face or online.'

Bullying can be:

- **Emotional** - being unfriendly, excluding, tormenting (e.g. hiding books, threatening gestures)
- **Physical** - pushing, kicking, hitting, punching or any use of violence
- **Verbal** - name-calling, sarcasm, spreading rumours, teasing because of size etc.
- **Online** - the use of electronic communication to bully a person, typically by sending messages of an intimidating or threatening nature includes all areas of internet, such as email & internet chat room misuse

Bullying can include discrimination based on:

- Race
- Faith
- Gender, including transgender
- Ability
- Appearance
- Sexuality
- Socio-Economic Background

Bullying can take place at any age and in any place. Section 89 of the Education and Inspections Act gives the headteacher the right to regulate students' conduct when they are not on school premises. This can relate to bullying incidents occurring on school or public transport, outside local shops or in any other public place when students are in school uniform. Bullying can also take place beyond school via social media.

The difference between Bullying and Relational Conflict

Conflict is a disagreement or a difference of opinion or interests between equals. The people involved in a conflict may disagree strongly and emotions may run high. When conflict is badly managed, it may result in aggression. In a conflict, both parties have power to influence the situation. Students exchanging unpleasant comments via social media is an example of such conflict, and may not represent an instance of bullying.

Conflict may be an inevitable part of group dynamics, but bullying is not. Both relational conflict and bullying require intervention, however they will often take different forms. When trying to determine whether an issue should be regarded as bullying the STOP acronym can be helpful; this stands for Several Times On Purpose.

Possible signs of bullying

Students who are being bullied may not always report it. However, there may be changes in their behaviour, such as becoming shy and nervous, feigning illness or unexplained injuries. To those who know the child it may simply be a feeling that 'things aren't quite right'. All school staff will be alert to the signs of bullying and act promptly and firmly against it in accordance with this policy.

Roles and Responsibilities

Governing Body

The Governing Body is responsible for ensuring that the anti-bullying policy:

- reflects the ethos and mission of the school and promotes the wellbeing of all members of the community.
- fulfils the statutory responsibilities of the school in relation to wellbeing, safeguarding and safety.
- is implemented across the school community.
- is reviewed and updated in the light of the review of practice, new research or best practice or changes to statutory requirements.

Headteacher

The headteacher has a responsibility to advise the governors in the preparation, review and implementation of the anti-bullying policy. They have a duty to ensure the policy is consistently and effectively implemented throughout the school.

The Headteacher will ensure:

- All incidents of bullying and the parties involved will be recorded and retained on a student file until the student reaches the age of 25.
- For monitoring purposes, the school is required to report the number of specific types of bullying that take place in school and submit this information to the local authority.

Staff

- Staff will actively promote anti-bullying strategies.
- If bullying is suspected, witnessed by or reported to a member of staff they will respond appropriately and record what has happened using the My Concern software.
- The Director of Learning will work with tutors to co-ordinate the investigation, ensuring parents and carers are informed and issues are resolved in a robust, effective and timely manner. Appropriate action will be taken in each case and this will vary from incident to incident.
- Action may include, but is not limited to, restorative justice meetings, detentions, inclusion, exclusion or police involvement where necessary.

- Educating young people on both the advantages and risks involved with social media is the joint responsibility of parents and carers and the school community.

Students

- A student experiencing or witnessing bullying should report it in one of the following ways:
 - Speaking to a trusted adult such as their form tutor, Learning and Behaviour Support Worker or Director of Learning.
 - Speak to a Student Leader.
 - Speak to their parent or carer.

Parents and Carers

- If parents and carers suspect their child is being bullied they should contact the child's tutor in the first instance.
- Parents and carers must leave the initial investigation to the school. Any attempt to resolve the issue themselves may make the matter worse. Parents and carers must understand that the school may have access to information that they do not have.
- The school will take all reasonable steps to investigate the allegations of bullying thoroughly. The school does not have the powers of the police, and does not operate in the same way. Conclusions are reached on the balance of probabilities.
- Parents and carers should encourage their child to talk to their tutor or other member of staff.
- Educating young people on both the advantages and risks involved with social media is the joint responsibility of parents and carers and the school community.
- The school expects parents and carers to monitor their child's access to social media and ensure that such access is age-appropriate.
- Parents and carers may also report concerns to the police, and restrict or cease their child's access to social media.
- In line with its behaviour policy, the school expects the full support of parents and carers in managing their child's behaviour, including online.

Bullying of Adults within the school environment

Our school takes measures to prevent and tackle bullying among students; however, it is equally important to recognise that bullying of staff and parents or carers, whether by students, parents or carers, or other staff members, within the school environment is unacceptable.

Adults (staff or parents and carers) who have been bullied or affected will be supported by:

- Offering an opportunity to discuss the concern with the designated safeguarding lead, a senior member of staff and/or the headteacher.
- Advising them to keep a record of the bullying as evidence and discuss how to respond to concerns and build resilience, as appropriate.
- Where the bullying takes place either on line or over the phone, the school will still investigate the concern and ensure that appropriate action is taken in accordance with the relevant school policies.
- Reporting offensive or upsetting content and/or accounts to the service provider, where the bullying has occurred online.
- Reassuring and offering appropriate support.
- Working with the wider community and local/national organisations to provide further or specialist advice and guidance.

Adults (staff and parents) who have perpetrated the bullying will be helped by:

- Discussing what happened with a senior member of staff and/or the headteacher to establish the concern.
- Establishing whether a legitimate grievance or concern has been raised and signposting to the school's official complaints procedures.
- If online, requesting that content be removed.
- Instigating disciplinary, civil or legal action as appropriate or required.

Legislation, Statutory Duties and Supporting Documents

There are several pieces of legislation which set out measures and actions for schools in response to bullying, as well as criminal and civil law. These include, but are not limited to:

- The Education and Inspection Act 2006, 2011
- The Equality Act 2010, which outlines the responsibilities of schools to respond to discrimination and promote equality.
- The Children Act 1989, which makes clear the expectation that bullying incidents should be addressed as a child protection issue where there is 'reasonable cause to suspect that a child is, or is likely to suffer, significant harm.'
- Protection from Harassment Act 1997
- The Malicious Communications Act 1988
- Public Order Act 1986

This policy has also been written in the light of

- DfE guidance "Preventing and Tackling Bullying" (2017) and supporting documents.
- "Working together to Safeguard Children" (2018) which stipulates that 'safeguarding' extends beyond child protection and includes issues such as health and safety and bullying.
- DfE statutory guidance "Keeping Children Safe in Education" (2020)

Links to other policies

This policy is linked to a number of other policies including:

The Positive Behaviour for Learning Policy

Safeguarding Policy

SEND Policy

The Acceptable Usage Policy

Policy Review

The Governing body will review this policy annually and associated procedures to ensure its continuing appropriateness and effectiveness. The review will take place in consultation with the headteacher, staff and parents and carers.

This policy has undergone an Equalities Impact Assessment in line with the requirements of the Public Sector Equality Duty.