



Overton St Helen's CE Primary School

Surrounded by God, we inspire hearts and minds through learning, faith and love.

'Let your light shine before others, that they may see your good deeds and glorify your Father in heaven' (Matthew 5: 16)

Anti-Bullying Policy

School Vision

We encourage children to be respectful, forgiving and compassionate. We are a nurturing, inclusive and safe community built on Christians Values that inspire positive trusting relationships between school, families and the wider world.

We aim high, engaging children in a dynamic and diverse curriculum with opportunities and experiences that allow them to excel, through discovering their unique talents, relishing challenges with courage and perseverance, knowing that God is with them.

Aim of the Policy

The aim of this policy is to outline for staff, pupils, parents and governors what is meant by bullying and how this can be identified. It also outlines the steps we take to ensure that such incidents are minimised and the procedure we school follow if such an incident takes place. It should be read in conjunction with our Behaviour Policy and Safeguarding Policy.

What is bullying?

Bullying is behaviour by an individual or group, repeated over time, that intentionally hurts another individual or group either physically or emotionally. Bullying can take many forms and is often motivated by prejudice against particular groups, for example on grounds of race, religion, gender, sexual orientation, or because a child is adopted or has caring responsibilities. It might be motivated by actual differences between children, or perceived differences.

Stopping violence and ensuring immediate physical safety is obviously a school's first priority but emotional bullying can be more damaging than physical; teachers and schools have to make their own judgements about each specific case. Many experts say that bullying involves an imbalance of power between the perpetrator and the victim. This could involve perpetrators of bullying having control over the relationship which makes it difficult for those they bully to defend themselves. The imbalance of power can manifest itself in several ways, it may be physical, psychological (knowing what upsets someone), derive from

an intellectual imbalance, or by having access to the support of a group, or the capacity to socially isolate. It can result in the intimidation of a person or persons through the threat of violence or by isolating them either physically or online.

The Role of the Witness

Witnessing bullying behaviour is a powerful situation to be in. If witnesses do nothing, they can act as an audience, which can encourage the children doing the bullying, even if they do not mean to. At Overton St Helen's, we teach the children that the witness needs to respond in a way to make bullying less likely:

- challenge the children doing the bullying (in certain circumstances);
- tell a trusted adult;
- talk to others;
- be kind to the person experiencing bullying.

We recognise the feelings that witnesses may experience and understand why they sometimes don't tell about the bullying they have seen. However, if bullying is to be tackled, all children have a role to play. If we feel that a witness has not responded appropriately to stop the bullying, or even encouraged the bullying behaviour, we may take disciplinary action against them as well. The witness may also need support which will be provided by teachers.

Prevention through Education

Our response to bullying does not start at the point at which a child has been bullied. At Overton St Helen's we have a number of approaches to prevent bullying happening in the first place, such as:

- Through our broad and balanced curriculum, we openly discuss differences between people that could motivate bullying, such as religion, ethnicity, disability, gender or sexuality. Also, children with different family situations, such as looked after children or those with caring responsibilities.
- Our commitment to delivering the Kidsafe Programme which explicitly tackles bullying, what to do in situations and how to keep ourselves safe
- Our PSHE curriculum which covers relationships and an open culture of understanding, respect and equality
- The School pays for the Coram Life Education Bus to visit school each year to work with pupils. Anti-bullying is part of these workshops and supports the wider curriculum.
- Our Christian Values and Vision underpins our approaches to relationships. Regular worship as a church school reminds the children of Christian Values that are important in the way we should live our lives. We celebrate those who regularly demonstrate these values through weekly and half-termly awards.
- A buddying system where our older pupils support our younger pupils in learning how to play positively with one another during breaks and lunchtimes

In addition to the above, we make staff aware that some children may be particularly vulnerable to bullying or may be severely affected by it, such as those with special educational needs or disabilities. Others may be particularly vulnerable because they are

going through a personal or family crisis, or suffering from a health problem. Collectively as a whole staff, we monitor these children discretely and regularly check that they are not subjected to any prejudices.

We also involve parents to ensure that they are clear that the school does not tolerate bullying and are aware of the procedures to follow if they believe that their child is being bullied. Our aim is that parents feel confident that we will take any complaint about bullying seriously and resolve the issue in a way that protects the child.

Procedures for dealing with bullying incidents

The member of staff who is designated with overall responsibility for bullying is the Headteacher as lead DSL. All incidents of potential bullying, which are disclosed to staff, should be reported to them. All incidents will be recorded in the school's CPOMS system by any adult involved in each individual case.

All staff have a duty of care to ensure that a child who reports an incident of bullying is treated sensitively and supported appropriately. The Headteacher, in discussion with the child's class teacher, will be involved in the discussion regarding investigation of a reported incident. If the incident is found to be bullying, then parents of the child who is being bullied and perpetrator/s will be informed.

In consultation with the class teacher, child and parents, a decision regarding actions required will be agreed and recorded on CPOMS. Incidents of bullying recorded in the log will be reviewed termly by the Headteacher, in consultation with class teachers, to check that this is not persisting.

If a parent has concerns that their child is being bullied, or has suffered a bullying incident, they are encouraged to discuss this with their child's class teacher initially, by arranging an appointment with the School Office. The teacher will then investigate and inform the Headteacher (see above). Parents will be kept informed of further actions.

Support for children (including witnesses), parents and staff during and immediately after incidents

Children who have been bullied will be supported appropriately at Overton St Helen's CE School so that they feel that they have been listened to and that they have some control over the situation they find themselves in. They will be involved in discussions to ensure that actions are seen as positive and support the child.

The class teacher and teaching assistant may be involved with the child and parents as part of the agreed action. This may include keeping an eye on the child at break/lunch time to regular sessions each week. All staff involved with the child will be kept informed of the agreed actions.

Although the school has a range of strategies to support children who have been bullied, all incidents are dealt with on an individual basis as a particular approach for one individual may not be appropriate for another.

Disciplinary measures

We will apply disciplinary measures to pupils who bully (as per our Behaviour Policy) in order to show clearly that their behaviour is wrong. This will be applied fairly, consistently, and reasonably taking account of any special educational needs or disabilities that the pupils may have and taking into account the needs of vulnerable pupils.

We will also consider the motivations behind bullying behaviour and whether it reveals any concerns for the safety of the perpetrator. Where this is the case the child engaging in bullying may need to support themselves through working with our school staff or relevant outside agencies.

Procedure for dealing with incidents reported by adults

If an adult within school feels that they have been bullied by another adult at the school, or have been subjected to a bullying incident, then this should be reported to the Headteacher. If such an incident involves the Headteacher, then the person is advised to contact the Chair of Governors.

Policy Agreed by Governors: November 2022

Next Review: Autumn 2024