

ST BARTHOLOMEW'S SCHOOL
ANTI-BULLYING POLICY
(An aspect of Safeguarding)

Reviewed by the Governors' Education Committee, Spring 2024
Approved by Full Governing Body, Spring 2024
To be reviewed Spring 2027

PURPOSE:

To support the school aim that every individual is safe and happy, the policy sets out to give a clear message to the whole school community that bullying will always be taken seriously and is always unacceptable.

We will not tolerate bullying or any action which shows a lack of respect towards another individual.

Every individual has the right to be safe and supported in an atmosphere where they can fulfil their potential.

The scope of the policy relates to any incidents that impact on an individual's capacity to be happy at school, regardless of place and medium or time.

The school is committed to the principles of the Anti-bullying charter. (DfE)

OBJECTIVES:

To promote the school's safe and caring ethos and the statutory responsibility with regards to the rights of children and to safeguard and promote their welfare.

All staff, governors, students and parents / carers should have an understanding of the different types of bullying.

All staff, governors, students and parents / carers should know what the school policy is and what to do if bullying arises.

GUIDANCE:

What is Bullying?

Bullying is "repeated, negative behaviour that is intended to make others feel upset, uncomfortable or unsafe." (Definition from the Diana Award).

There are different types of bullying, but the four main types are:

PHYSICAL bullying is the repeated, negative use of body contact to intentionally hurt others:

- Hitting, kicking, or other physical, inappropriate contact, making gestures, spitting..

VERBAL bullying is the repeated, negative use of speech, sign language, or verbal gestures to intentionally hurt others

Name-calling, teasing, making comments focussing on the issue of sexuality race or disability, insulting remarks, graffiti, offensive language, or swear words.

INDIRECT bullying is the repeated, negative use of actions, which are neither physical nor verbal, to intentionally hurt others:

- Spreading rumours, purposefully excluding another person, damaging, hiding or stealing someone's property.

CYBERBULLYING is the repeated, negative use of technology to intentionally hurt others:

- posting unwanted pictures or messages, accessing another person's account without permission, creating fake accounts to impersonate or harass someone, and sharing other people's private information online. Threats from a mobile phone by text messaging and calls. Misuse of associated technology, ie: camera and video facilities.

Possible Signs of Bullying:

Individuals who are being bullied may show changes in behaviour, such as becoming shy and nervous, feigning illness, becoming increasingly isolated or withdrawn or seeking the safety of adult company. There may also be changes in appearance. Some may become aggressive towards others and become a bully themselves. They may show changes in their work patterns, may lack concentration and / or may truant from school.

Encouragement to tell:

It is important that we create an atmosphere in the school where individuals who are being bullied, or others who know about it, feel that they will be listened to and believed, and that action taken will be swift but sensitive to their concerns.

IMPLEMENTATION

Students:

A student being bullied or knowing that someone else is, should tell a member of staff, parent / carer or Anti-Bullying Ambassador straight away, and it will be dealt with. The school will also provide alternative ways for you to raise any concerns. Every disclosure will be dealt with seriously and sensitively. Maintaining silence means the victim will continue to suffer and the bully will carry on, probably bullying others too. We all have a responsibility to ensure that bullying is not allowed to continue in our school.

Parents:

If you think your child may be being bullied, or they tell you that they are, please let someone at the school know straight away, usually the Tutor or a member of the House team. Please reassure your child that we will deal with it sensitively but firmly. If your child tells us that they are being bullied, or we discover that they are bullying others, we will contact you and discuss together how the situation can be resolved.

Members of Staff:

- **Be vigilant**

Be observant for incidents of bullying in your tutor or teaching group and whilst moving around the school; monitor each individual for possible signs of bullying. Regularly reinforce the message that bullying of any kind is unacceptable;

- **Be sensitive and take action**

- Do not be dismissive of complaints about bullying – make time to listen.
- Acknowledge all complaints as promptly as possible. Recognise that however trivial – they may just be the ‘tip of the iceberg’ or part of a pattern.
- Record a clear account of the incident(s) reported, and share this with appropriate members of staff (Form Tutor /House staff / Head of Department / Faculty), including on SIMS where appropriate, and in accordance, with whole school and departmental policies on behaviour and discipline.

- **Investigating Serious Incidents**

In cases judged by Senior Staff at the school to be more ‘serious’ an investigation will be conducted in accordance with the ‘Guidelines for Investigating a Serious Incident’.

- **Outcomes**

- The bullying behaviour and threats of bullying must stop immediately.
- Parents will be informed
- Whenever possible, the students will be reconciled through restorative practices.
- Both victim and bully will be instructed to report any future incidents.
- After the incidents have been investigated and dealt with, students involved will be monitored (either formally or informally) to ensure that a repetition of bullying does not occur
- The primary concern will always be for the well being of the victim and this will be borne in mind when considering the consequences of bullying.

- **For the student who has been bullied**

- Immediate action to secure the students safety.
- Students will be reassured that reporting the incident was the correct thing to do.
- Efforts will be made to boost / restore self-esteem.
- Houses will work with parents and carers to establish the best avenue of support.
- This could include in-school support from the student’s tutor, the House Team, our Pastoral Support Worker or other members of staff in school. We might also refer to a local external agency, like The Emotional Health Academy in Newbury or signpost students to a support network like SAFE!.

- **For the student who has bullied**

- Appropriate and proportionate consequences in accordance with school procedures will take place, including official warnings to cease offending, detention, exclusion from certain areas of the school site, withdrawal of internet / ICT use within the school.
 - In serious cases the Headteacher will consider whether or not a suspension or permanent exclusion is appropriate.
 - Parents will be informed.
 - The bully will provide an apology, and may be required to sign a contract.
 - Efforts will be made to help the student(s) change their behaviour and attitude.
 - Support will be offered to students from an appropriate source, which might include their tutor, the House Team, our Pastoral Support Worker or other external agency.
- **Preventing bullying**
 - 'High standards of behaviour, respect for one another and their differences are demanded of all students. Our BARTS values will be displayed throughout the school and will reinforce appropriate ways for all students to behave and act as members of St Bartholomew's School.
 - Each year students will sign the anti-bullying pledge.
 - Students will continue to be actively engaged in the review and implementation of the anti-bullying policy, through School Councils.
 - There will be reminders of the standards we expect, which will be displayed throughout the school.
 - Student Anti-Bullying Ambassadors will be trained in recognising and taking appropriate action when they observe bullying or it is disclosed to them.
 - Students are encouraged to make their voices heard and to participate as active members of the school community.
 - There will be supervised places in the school for students to go to at break and activity time.
 - The Anti-bullying Policy will be widely publicised to all students and members of the school community, especially at points of transition.
 - Students will be encouraged to speak out if bullying is occurring.
 - The anti-bullying message will be reinforced through the Personal Development Programme, tutor time, assemblies and subject areas.
 - The school will continue to support the national anti-bullying week, mid November in order to support a whole school focus.
 - The school will continue to hold and renew as required the West Berkshire Anti-Bullying Award.

Evaluation

This policy will be reviewed at least every 3 years by Governors.

An anti-bullying report will be compiled and co-ordinated by the Leadership Team.

The report will be presented to the Governors' Education Committee on a termly basis to provide an indication of the implementation and effectiveness of the Anti-bullying Policy.

The incidents relating to Social Media will also be indicated on the report to Governors, as a way to monitor the level of activity in this area.

Agreed at the meeting of the Full Governing Body on Wednesday 20th March, 2024.