



West Pennard C of E Primary School

Anti-bullying Policy

February 2023

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Review date:

February 2025

West Pennard CE VC School Anti-bullying Policy 2023

Our school vision...

***'Since God so loved us, so we must love one another'
(1 John 4 v11)***

Valuing our Christian foundation, we care for each other and our world.

We develop resilience, confidence, creativity and independence through our innovative and diverse curriculum; inspiring and motivating everyone to thrive.

Our motto, 'To Try is to Triumph' and growing Christian Values, are central to all that we do.

We link this policy with our Christian values of:

- ❖ **Truthfulness**
- ❖ **Compassion**
- ❖ **Friendship**
- ❖ **Thankfulness**
- ❖ **Respect**
- ❖ **Forgiveness**

We are fully committed to each day a fresh start in the spirit of forgiveness and Christian love.

Statement of Intent

At West Pennard CE Primary School 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. Bullying of any kind is unacceptable and will not be tolerated in our school. We take all incidents of bullying seriously. Bullying hurts. No-one deserves to be a victim of bullying. Everybody has the right to be treated with respect and pupils who are bullying others need to learn different ways of behaving. When bullying does occur, everyone should be able to tell and know that incidents will be dealt with promptly and effectively in accordance with this policy. We are a TELLING school. This means that anyone who knows that bullying is happening is expected to tell the staff.

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.

What 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.

The role of governors

- The governing board supports the headteacher in all attempts to eliminate bullying from our school.
- The governing board will not condone any bullying at all in our school, and any incidents of bullying that do occur will be taken very seriously, and dealt with appropriately.
- The governing board monitors incidents of bullying that do occur, and reviews the effectiveness of this policy regularly.
- The governors require the headteacher to keep accurate records of all incidents of bullying, and to report to the governors on request about the effectiveness of school anti-bullying strategies.
- A parent who is dissatisfied with the way the school has dealt with a bullying incident can ask the chair of governors to look into the matter. In all cases, the governing board notifies the headteacher, and asks him/her to conduct an investigation into the case, and to report back to a representative of the governing board. See Complaints Policy

The role of the headteacher

- It is the responsibility of the headteacher to implement the school anti-bullying strategy, and to ensure that all staff (both teaching and non-teaching) are aware of the school policy, and know how to identify and deal with incidents of bullying. The headteacher reports to the governing board about the effectiveness of the anti-bullying policy on request.
- The headteacher ensures that all children know that bullying is wrong, and that it is unacceptable behaviour in this school. The headteacher draws the attention of children to this fact at suitable moments. The headteacher ensures that all staff, including lunchtime staff, receive sufficient training to be equipped to identify and deal with all incidents of bullying.
- The headteacher sets the school climate of mutual support and praise for success, so making bullying less likely. When children feel they are important and belong to a friendly and welcoming school, bullying is far less likely to be part of their behaviour.

The role of the teacher and support staff

- All the staff in our school take all forms of bullying seriously, and seek to prevent it from taking place.
- Teachers keep their own records of all incidents that happen in their class, and that they are aware of in the school. If teachers witness an act of bullying, they will either investigate it themselves or refer it to the headteacher. Teachers and support staff do all they can to support the child who is being bullied. If a child is being bullied over a period of time, then, after consultation with the headteacher, the teacher informs the child's parents.
- When any bullying has taken place between members of a class, the teacher will deal with the issue immediately. This may involve discussion and support for the victim, and punishment for the offender. Time is spent talking to the child who has done the bullying, explaining to them why their action was wrong and how they should change their behaviour in future. Possible underlying reasons for bullying will also be investigated as this can reflect difficulties that the child may have regarding their well-being out of school. If a child is repeatedly involved in bullying, we inform the headteacher and the special needs coordinator. We then invite the child's parents into the school to discuss the situation. In more extreme cases, e.g. where these initial discussions have proved ineffective, the headteacher may contact external support agencies.
- All members of staff routinely attend training, which equips them to identify bullying and to follow school policy and procedures with regard to behaviour management. Teachers use a range of methods to help prevent bullying and to establish a climate of trust and respect for all. They use drama, role-play, stories etc., within the formal curriculum, to help pupils understand the feelings of bullied children, and to practise the restraint required to avoid lapsing into bullying behaviour. Circle time, PSHE sessions, visitors from minority groups and specialised companies, Value days and weekly Celebration Assembly are used to praise, reward and celebrate the success of all children, and thus to help create a positive atmosphere.

The role of parents

- Parents who are concerned that their child might be being bullied, or who suspect that their child may be the perpetrator of bullying, should contact their child's class teacher immediately. If they are not satisfied with the response, they should contact the headteacher. If they remain dissatisfied, they should follow the school's complaints procedure, as detailed on the school website.
- Parents have a responsibility to support the school's anti-bullying policy, actively encouraging their child to be a positive member of the school.

The role of pupils

- Pupils are encouraged to tell anybody they trust if they are being bullied, and if the bullying continues, they must keep on letting people know.
- Pupils are invited to tell us their views about a range of school issues, including bullying, in pupil questionnaires and interviews.

DETECTING BULLYING

Changes in behaviour that may indicate that a pupil is being bullied include:

- Unwillingness to return to school
- Displays of excessive anxiety, becoming withdrawn or unusually quiet
- Failure to produce work, or producing unusually bad work, or work that appears to have been copied, interfered with or spoilt by others
- Books, bags and other belongings suddenly go missing, or are damaged

- Change to established habits (e.g. giving up afterschool clubs)
- Diminished levels of self confidence
- Frequent visits to the Medical room with symptoms such as stomach pains, headaches
- Unexplained cuts and bruises
- Poor attendance and issues with punctuality
- Choosing the company of adults
- Displaying repressed body language and poor eye contact
- Difficulty in sleeping, experiences nightmares

Although there may be other causes for some of the above signals, a repetition of, or a combination of these possible signs of bullying should be investigated by parents and teachers.

Racism

"A racist incident is any incident which is perceived to be racist by the victim or any other person" (Stephen Lawrence enquiry report)

At West Pennard any form of racism will not be tolerated.

Examples of racism that we need to be alert to include:

1. Physical assault
2. Derogatory name-calling, verbal abuse, insults, innuendo (including name-calling that may not use overtly racist language but which derives some of its force from pupils' perceived 'race')
3. Verbal threats
4. Ridiculing people because of cultural or religious differences
5. Written derogatory remarks
6. Refusal to co-operate with other people because of their religion, ethnicity or language
7. Racist graffiti
8. Incitement of others to behave in a racist manner
9. Using the school's computer systems to access or distribute racist material
10. Abuse of personal property
11. Malicious telephone calls, text messages or e-mails
12. Social exclusion (for example refusal to allow someone to join in a game or attempt to isolate)
13. Expression of racist views during the course of a staff led discussion or in informal contexts (this might include use of racist language, negative stereotypical generalisations or holocaust denial)
14. Telling racist jokes

On being informed of a racist incident the headteacher will ensure that:

- The victim is fully supported at the time of the incident and supported following incident, e.g. discussion, counselling
- There is clear challenge and/or reprimand / sanction for offender at the time of the incident and that the offender is followed up through discussion, counselling to reduce the likelihood of a repeat
- All staff who work with victim or offender informed
- Parents of both the victim and offender are informed of the incident and the follow up actions
- A whole class / group follow-up may be needed to ensure that there repetition of racism is reduced

- When appropriate a referral to other agencies and or the police may be deemed appropriate
- A racist incident online form is completed and submitted to Somerset County Council.

When working with offenders restorative approaches will be used which includes: attending to the needs of those on the receiving end of racism; preventing re-offending by enabling offenders to assume active responsibility for their actions and reintegrating them into the school community; avoiding escalation; and, repairing and recreating the community damaged by the bullying.

CHILD ON CHILD ABUSE

Child-on-child abuse is abuse by one or more children against another child. It can manifest itself in many ways and can include bullying (including cyber bullying), physical abuse, sexting, sexual assault, gender-based issues and harmful sexual behaviours. At West Pennard all bullying and child-on-child abuse is unacceptable and must be dealt with in this context. Abusive comments and interactions should never be passed off or dismissed as "banter" or "part of growing up".

Please refer to the Safeguarding Policy for further details on child-on-child abuse and the management of allegations.

Homophobia and gender-based discrimination

We should be alert to sexual bullying based around sexual orientation. Generally Homophobic and gender-based bullying looks like other sorts of bullying, but in particular it can include:

- Verbal abuse - including spreading rumours that someone is gay, suggesting that something or someone is inferior and so they are 'gay' - e.g. 'those trainers are so gay!'
- Physical abuse – including hitting, punching, kicking, sexual assault, and threatening behaviour.
- Cyberbullying– using on-line spaces to spread rumours about someone or exclude them. Can also include text messaging, including video and picture messaging.

Special educational needs and disability

We are alert to the fact that pupils with special educational needs or disabilities are often at greater risk of being bullied than other pupils on the basis of their educational difficulties or disability.

Cyberbullying

With constantly advancing technology we are alert to this unpleasant and particularly intrusive form of bullying. Cyberbullying can involve Social Networking Sites, like Snap chat, Instagram, Facebook and Twitter, emails and mobile phones, used for SMS messages and as cameras.

Banter

It should be noted that abusive comments and interactions may not be passed off as mere 'banter'. Such comments referring to a person's race, religion, ethnicity, sexuality, culture, special educational needs or because a child is a carer are not acceptable and will be treated in-line with this policy.

Monitoring and review

- This policy is monitored by the headteacher, who reports to governors on request about the effectiveness of the policy.

- The anti-bullying policy is the governors' responsibility, and they review its effectiveness annually. They do this by examining the school's behaviour logs, where incidents of bullying are recorded, and by discussion with the headteacher. Governors analyse information for patterns of people, places or groups. They look out in particular for racist bullying, homophobic or gender-based bullying, or bullying directed at children with disabilities or special educational needs.

This policy will be reviewed every two years, or earlier if necessary.