



**St Edward's**  
RC/CE VA School

# Anti-Bullying Policy

**Reviewed and Ratified at the St Edward's FGB**

**On: 14 December 2017**

**Next review date: December 2018**

*In – year policy updates are in italics*

**Member of SLT responsible: Mr C Farrow**

St Edward's School is committed to providing a caring, friendly and safe environment for all of our students so 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.
- communicate the different role 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 take place beyond school via social media. The school expects parents and carers to monitor their child's access to social media and ensure that such access is age-appropriate. 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. Where online bullying is affecting young people's experience of school, we will seek to investigate, sanction and educate as far as possible. Parents and carers may also report concerns to the police.

### **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.

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. For example, while peer mediation might be appropriate for relational conflict it *may not be* for issues of bullying.

### **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**

### **Statutory Duties**

Schools have statutory responsibilities in relation to safety and wellbeing. These come from:

- A Duty to Safeguard and Promote the Welfare of Children (*The Education Act 2002*).
- Statutory guidance issued under Section 175 called *Keeping Children Safe in Education*, September 2016.
- *Working Together to Safeguard Children* (2015) which stipulates that 'safeguarding' extends beyond child protection and includes issues such as health and safety and bullying.
- The *Children Act* (1989) 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.'
- The *Equality Act* (2010) which outlines the responsibilities of schools to respond to discrimination and promote equality.

### **Governing Body**

The Governing Body are 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 witnessed by a member of staff they will respond appropriately.

- If bullying is reported to a member of staff they will record the details presented to them and pass them on to the year leader.
- The year leader will co-ordinate the investigation, including informing parents and carers when appropriate and logging bullying incidents on the management information system.
- If a member of staff has other reasons to suspect that someone might be the target of bullying, they will share those concerns with the relevant year leader.
- Staff will ensure that after an incident has been reported that they will communicate with all parties involved in the incident and with their parent or carer about the response that followed. This may mean that no action other than discussion with those involved needs to take place.

#### **Students**

- A student reporting bullying should report it to an adult; whether that is a parent or carer, their tutor or year leader or some other member of staff.
- Students who witness bullying must also report this to an adult.
- If a student does not feel comfortable speaking directly to an adult, they may discuss it with a student leader.

#### **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.

#### **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.

### **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.