

Date reviewed:	March 2021
Next Review:	March 2023

Anti-bullying Policy

March 2021



Overall aims

Fishponds Church of England Academy strives to be a fully inclusive school. Our Vision statement is '**Loving to Learn, Learning to Love**' and this is underpinned by the Bible Passage 1 Corinthians 13 v 4-7:

'Love is patient and kind; love does not envy or boast; it is not arrogant⁵ or rude. It does not insist on its own way; it is not irritable or resentful;⁶ it does not rejoice at wrongdoing, but rejoices with the truth. ⁷Love bears all things, believes all things, hopes all things, endures all things. (1 Corinthians 13 v4 - 7 Bible ESV)

We have chosen 12 core values that we feel underpin that passage and we strive to teach and live these values together as a school and wider community.



We at Fishponds Church of England Academy recognise that bullying happens in many contexts and in many ways. We do our best to prevent bullying, however our aim is to ensure that it is dealt with sensitively and effectively if and when it arises.

To help our children we will foster a nurturing and **loving** environment built on **truth, generosity, patience, kindness, trust** and **respect** and **forgiveness** for and of each other. The school will provide a safe environment where all will be **encouraged** to do their best. We will treat all our children as individuals and **persevere** to meet their specific needs to ensure that all can access the curriculum (**justice**). We will give each of our children **hope** that they can be successful and prepared for their future journeys.

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There needs to be a whole school understanding of anti-bullying procedures, to ensure that all stakeholders are able to report concerns whilst being confident the matter will be successfully resolved and addressed. We want our children to develop life skills based upon our 12 core values) to enable them to live harmoniously (**with love**) within our diverse and multi-cultural world.

Definitions of bullying

Although there is no legal definition of bullying, it is usually defined as behaviour that is:

- repeated
- intended to hurt someone either physically or emotionally
- often aimed at certain groups, e.g. because of ethnicity, religion, gender, disability or sexual orientation

It takes many forms and can include:

- Physical - *hitting, kicking, taking belongings*
- Verbal - *name calling, teasing, insulting, racist or homophobic remarks*
- Indirect - *spreading nasty stories, excluding someone from a social group*
- Extortion - *demand for money or favours*
- Cyber-bullying - *name calling, teasing, insulting, racist or homophobic remarks made using social media*
- Sexual - *upskirting, sexual harassment, sexting*
- Peer on peer - *initiation /haze violence and rituals*

Not all aggression is bullying, nor all name-calling, it may be a one off act of unkindness. **It becomes bullying when there are a number of unkind acts directed towards the victim over time.** Bullying is exercised through the use of power, rather than an exchange between equals. This power might be due to:

- Greater physical strength
- Greater number
- Use of psychological power

Who might bully?

Both boys and girls can bully others. The most common perpetrators of bullying behaviour are individual boys or groups of several boys. Mixed sex bullying gangs are less common. Girls who bully others are more usually in a group than on their own, often using indirect bullying which can be more difficult for teachers to detect. Studies show that 75% of bullying takes place in the playground. Reasons for being a bully may include:

- Previous experience of being bullied
- Feeling of inadequacy
- Life situation feeling out of control / unhappy
- Copying behaviour from home/TV

Preventative work and establishing an anti-bullying culture

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The most important aspect of our strategy to combat bullying is the creation of a positive and inclusive school ethos. This begins with how adults in the school treat each other, parents, and pupils: with respect and understanding, even in difficult situations. Concerns expressed by pupils and parents are always listened to carefully and taken seriously.

We have a very clear **Behaviour Policy** which states the behaviours we want to promote, and the rewards which go along with those behaviours. Within the **school curriculum** there are many opportunities to promote the understanding of feelings and emotions, most specifically through Collective Worship, Circle Time and PSHE lessons. Monday's Collective Worship is led by a member of SLT who addresses a core value and links this to social interaction, self-reflection and a deeper understanding. This is then followed up in class Collective Worship.

The school uses the Jigsaw PSHE scheme of work, which contains a specific focus on recognising and dealing with bullying. One of the chief aims of the programme is to create a school community based on good relationships. We have an annual 'Say No to Bullying' week which raises the profile of anti-bullying, providing opportunities to explore issues and ensuring all of the school community know our policy and procedures.

Our approach to tackling bullying: the 'problem-solving' approach

Where a case of bullying has been identified, our principal aim is **to restore relationships between the victim and the bully**. Our approach is based on the widely accepted understanding that the most effective strategies to combat bullying include the following:

- Involvement of the wider school community in finding a solution to the problem/s
- Consistency in prevention and response
- Taking all issues seriously
- Not seeking in the first instance to apportion blame
- Involving parents/carers at an early stage

The most successful intervention strategies all involve a **problem-solving approach**.

What we aim to do:

- Encouraging reporting We encourage children, parents/carers and staff to report **any** suspected instances of bullying to one of the teaching staff or to the Principal. Children in particular need to be assured not to keep worries to themselves, but to tell their parent/carer and/or a teacher. The whole school community needs to be assured that all instances are taken very seriously, and investigated thoroughly.
- Response It is essential that the first adult involved in the situation reassures the 'victim' and informs the member of staff nominated to deal with bullying as soon as possible. Currently the nominated people (NP) at Fishponds CE Academy are the Principal, Vice Principal and Phase Leaders. The NP then takes the following steps:

Step one - interview with the victim

When the NP finds out that bullying has happened they start by talking to the 'victim' about what the victim sees as the problem, and how they feel about it. The NP makes notes about the bullied child's feelings/'symptoms' - not wanting to come to school etc., as well as the version of events as

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described by the child. They will then obtain permission from the child to arrange a meeting with the bully/bullies/ spectators. A list of those involved is drawn up by the NP. The NP then tells the 'victim' that they will arrange a meeting with these children.

Step two - convene a meeting with the people involved

The meeting takes place led by the NP. Those present will be the victim (if happy to attend) and the child(ren) identified in Step 1. The first point made, even as the meeting is being set up, is that it is a meeting - not a telling off. The tone set should be a friendly one: "we have a problem here in school, let's see if we can solve it." It is important to say that the people invited to the meeting are there because they may be able to help and that nobody is in trouble.

Step three - explain the problem

The NP tells them about the way the 'victim' is feeling, mentioning what has been told to him/her at the previous meeting. If appropriate, an example of the behaviour that led to these feelings may be mentioned, and the group invited to comment on their perceptions. At this stage, no blame is to be ascribed. With very young children it can be told almost as a story.

Step four - share responsibility

The NP does not attribute blame but states that s/he knows that the group could help resolve the situation.

Step five - ask the group for their ideas

Each member of the group is encouraged to suggest a way in which the victim could be helped to feel happier. The NP gives positive responses, and guides the discussion as appropriate. A commitment to change from the group may be one outcome.

Step six - leave it up to them

The NP ends the meeting by passing over the responsibility to the group to solve the problem. The NP arranges to meet with them again to see how things are going.

Step seven - meet them again

About a week later the NP discusses with each child including the victim, how things have been going. This allows the NP to monitor the bullying and keeps the children involved in the process. Further reviews may be decided on as necessary.

Additional guidelines

- **Communication** It is important that there is on-going communication during this process between the NP and class teachers of all children involved. The Principal and Vice Principal should also be informed, if they are not involved at this stage already. Other members of staff (e.g. SMSAs) are also likely to need to be kept informed.
- **Involving Parents/carers** Parents/carers of all children involved should be informed at the earliest opportunity, so that their support can be encouraged. Parents/carers are encouraged to:
 - Listen carefully to their child, and reassure them that their concerns will be taken seriously.
 - Stay calm whatever the concerns
 - Discuss issues with the school at the earliest opportunity, and review actions regularly

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- Give the school time to address the issues. The school will ensure that they share actions taken to resolve the issues.
- **Monitoring** Informal monitoring should continue for some time after the initial identification of the problem. Appropriate further support should be offered to both victim and bully – e.g. help in developing friendship or assertiveness skills or self-esteem training. Circle Time can also be used as a vehicle to prevent further problems arising. Our Reward System can also be used to reinforce positive behaviour and to raise self-esteem.
- **Formal Monitoring** A written record of those involved and the action taken should be made on CPOMs. (CPOMS is the school's online monitoring system).
- **Training** All staff are to have regular training in the development of anti-bullying strategies. All new teachers will be trained in the use of Circle Time. SMSAs will receive training aimed at developing their skills in promoting positive playground behaviour.
- **Looked After Children** Where children involved, either as victim or bully, are looked after by the Local Authority, it is essential that their Social Worker is involved at the earliest opportunity.
- **Bullying by adults** Where an instance of adult or child bullying by a member of staff is reported to the school, appropriate measures should be taken in accordance with the Academy Complaints Policy and will be reported to the LADO (local authority designated officer) and DBAT.

Prejudice Related Bullying

Under the Equalities Act 2010 it is against the law to discriminate against anyone because of:

- Age
- Being or becoming a transsexual person
- Being married or in a civil partnership
- Being pregnant or having a child
- Disability
- Gender
- Race including colour, nationality, ethnic or national origin including Gypsy, Roma, Travellers
- Religion, belief or lack of religion/belief
- Sex
- Sexual orientation

These are called 'protected characteristics'.

As part of the requirement on schools to promote fundamental British values, schools must proactively challenge derogatory and discriminatory language and behaviour including that which is racist, homophobic, biphobic, transphobic and disabilist in nature. We will record these types of bullying, even that which represents a one-off incident, and report them to DBAT / Local Authority for monitoring purposes.

Procedures The procedure for any incident should be as follows:

- Incident to be reported to the Principal/ Vice Principal (the designated person) immediately.
- Principal/ Vice Principal investigates incident as quickly as is practicable: written report made.
- Principal/ Vice Principal reports incident to victim's and perpetrator's parents/carers.

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- Support offered to the victim and action taken to address the perpetrator's behaviour. This may simply be a discussion/counselling, or it may take the form of an Engagement / Individual Support Plan. The approach taken may be a 'problem-solving one' (see anti-bullying procedures for further details) or a more direct approach, depending on the situation. Outside agencies may be involved as necessary (e.g. Education Welfare/ Pupil Referral Service).
- Incident reported to Academy Council for monitoring purposes.
- Situation is monitored closely over ensuing weeks. Checks up to also be recorded on CPOMs. (CPOMs is the school's online monitoring system)

Complaints Any complaints in respect of this policy should be addressed in the first instance to the Principal (see also **Complaints Policy**)

Continuation of Bullying

In the event that any child involved continues to bully others, then it will be necessary to initiate further action. The child/ren may need to be placed on **school report** for a period of time, or an **Engagement / Individual Support Plan** may need to be drawn up and a behaviour modification programme initiated, which could need support from outside agencies, such as the Psychology Service, Learning Support Service, Education Welfare Service or Behaviour Support Team. Further parental involvement would be essential. If all of these strategies were tried and failed, then the school would invoke its **staged disciplinary procedure**. Ultimately this can lead to permanent exclusion from the school. However, it would always remain the intention of the school to endeavour to restore the relationships and support both parties to find an agreeable solution.

The development of positive playground behaviour

Given that the majority of bullying incidents are found to occur at break times, it is essential that staff and children are both involved closely in:

- The development of an attractive playground environment
- Supervision of any 'hidden corners'
- The development of playground games
- Developing alternative lunchtime activities, e.g.: use of lunch club or involving older children with younger children
- Developing buddy systems and roles such as playground buddies.

Promotion of this policy

It is essential that all governors(local board members), staff, parents and children are aware of this policy.

- Academy Council: All Academy Council members will receive a copy of this policy.
- Staff: New staff should be made aware of the policy as part of their Induction process. The policy and procedures will be discussed with staff and revised as necessary on a bi- annual basis.
- Parents/carers: All parents/carers will be informed through the newsletter when the policy has been reviewed. Copies of the policy will be available on request. Comments from parents/carers are very much welcomed. This policy will also be available on the School Website.

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- Children: All children need to be made aware of the contents of this policy, on a level appropriate to their age and understanding. This will be part of the school's PSHE curriculum, as well as through school assemblies and the annual 'Say No to Bullying Week.' The school council is also a key vehicle for promoting an anti-bullying message.

Monitoring and Evaluation

The Principal and Vice Principal monitor the Policy on an ongoing basis.

Evaluation takes place through:

- Regular discussions with children (especially through School Council)
- Regular discussion with staff (including termly meetings with Lunchbreak supervisors)
- The Principal reports on bullying and protected group incidents to The Academy Council.

This policy should be read in conjunction with the DBAT Equalities Policy and Fishponds CE Academy Safeguarding policy. This can be found on the school's website under Equalities page and the safeguarding page respectively.

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Appendix to Bullying Policy

Key References

This policy draws heavily on the **Local Authority (LA) Anti-Bullying Guidance**. Copies of this are available from Bristol City Council. A full list of further references can be found at the back of the LA guidelines.

Specific note should be made of:

- <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/preventing-and-tackling-bullying>
- https://www.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/444864/Supporting_bullied_children.pdf
- https://www.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/374850/Cyberbullying_Advice_for_Headteachers_and_School_Staff_121114.pdf
- https://www.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/444865/Advice_for_parents_on_cyberbullying.pdf
- www.antibullying.net
- Childline: Confidential free helpline for children 0800 1111
- Anti-Bullying Campaign: Advice for parents and children 0207 378 1446
- JIGSAW (PSHE program used in school)
- Stonewall project against homophobic bullying
- The C of E report on Valuing All God's Children, authored by Katy Staples

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- The Equality Act 2010.
- Keeping Children Safe in Education September 2020