

St. Augustine's Junior C of E (VA) Junior School

Anti-Bullying & Dealing with Prejudice Incidents Policy

ANTI – BULLYING AND PREJUDICE-RELATED INCIDENTS POLICY

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Aims of the Policy

The aims of this policy are:

- To ensure that our children are educated in a caring Christian environment where all children feel safe, happy and secure in school.
- To ensure that all pupils, staff, parents and governors have an understanding of what bullying and prejudice mean and their impact on a victim's emotional well-being.
- To ensure that all pupils, staff and parents have guidance and strategies to deal with, resolve bullying, and prejudice related incidents when they occur.
- To encourage children to behave in a responsible manner toward each other, taking responsibility for their own behaviour in accordance with our behaviour policy.
- To ensure that the curriculum teaches why bullying/prejudice is unacceptable and how it can be dealt with effectively.
- To ensure that the school's safeguarding procedures are considered and/or implemented if appropriate.

Underlying Principles

Each bullying and prejudice related incident holds unique and distinctive features, which need to be considered; our school's responses should be informed by the principles below if we are to challenge and counter prejudice related incidents and ensure the wellbeing and achievement of all our children.

- All pupils are entitled to an education, which respects and values their identity, individuality and background and is free from prejudice, harassment and adverse discrimination.
- Prejudice related bullying could prevent children from learning and be a significant barrier to their achievement.
- Prejudice related bullying impacts on a child's social and emotional wellbeing.
- Strategies for dealing with discrimination need to be linked to the schools Behaviour Policy.
- All staff, children, parents, carers and governors should be aware of the school's policy and procedures for dealing with prejudice related incidents.
- All allegations of prejudice related bullying should be taken seriously and investigated thoroughly.
- Schools should keep parents, carers and children informed during an investigation and advise them of any action that is taken. This should be discussed sensitively with the child or young person beforehand.
- Schools and the Local Authority will be open and honest in their dealings with pupils, parents, carers and members of local communities about prejudice related incidents and will value their help and support in tackling these issues.

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Definition of Bullying

We consider that bullying is **repeated, deliberate** behaviour, repeated over a period of time, which makes another person feel threatened, distressed, hurt or upset.

Definition of Prejudice Related Incidents

A **racist incident** is any incident which is perceived to be racist by the victim or any other person.

A **disability related incident** is any incident which is perceived to be so by the victim or any other person.

A **homophobic related incident** is any incident which is perceived to be homophobic by the victim or any other person. Furthermore, the victim does not have to be LGBTQ (Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual, Transgender or Questioning) to experience homophobic bullying, but may be targeted because they are perceived to be LGBTQ, or because a member of their family is LGBTQ, for example.

Forms of Bullying and Prejudice Related Incidents

Verbal (Name-Calling, Taunting, Mocking)

This covers name-calling, insults, threats and prejudice related 'jokes'; and incitement of others to behave in a prejudiced way. It also includes ridicule of a person's appearance, speech/accent, background, religion, culture; the regular use, consciously or unconsciously of offensive and discriminatory language. An example of this would be the 'casual' use of homophobic language such as the use of "gay" to mean "stupid". Staff will challenge all such derogatory language and inform the frequent users that it is unacceptable.

Written

This includes offensive writing, drawings, emails and text messages as well as items posted on the internet, including social networking sites.

Graffiti

This includes offensive writing and drawings in public places and anywhere in the school.

Physical

This includes a range of violent actions, where unwanted physical contact occurs. This can include hitting, kicking, the use of weapons, pushing, shoving or tripping someone.

Intimidation/coercion

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This includes making fun of children and adults, offensive gestures, mimicry, intimidating body language and obstruction, for example when entering a school classroom or within the school environment, as well as making someone do or say something against their will.

Extortion

Extortion specifically relates to forcing someone to give up something they own, or have in their custody, such as money, personal possessions or school property.

Personal possessions taken or damaged

This includes deliberately damaging or breaking a person's property, spoiling or destroying a piece of work, hiding a pupil's bag, pens, shoes and other personal property or the school's property that is in the possession of or being used by the victim.

Isolation, being ignored or left out

This includes a refusal to sit next to or work with another child, for example, in working groups, lunchtime queues, and playground activities.

Spreading rumours

The spreading of rumours and/or malicious gossip, particularly with the intention of causing hurt those named in the rumours.

Cyber (Social Media, email, text)

Cyberbullying is the use of Information Communications Technology (ICT), particularly mobile phones and the internet, deliberately to upset someone else. As such, technology is often the vehicle for the bullying, and therefore spreading rumours, for example, may be done via the internet, and would therefore be both 'Spreading rumours' and 'Cyber.' All children will need to sign an Acceptable User policy before being allowed to use technology in school, which clearly highlights bullying and acceptable behaviour online.

The use of mobile phones on the school site by the children is not permitted. Children who bring a phone into school should place their phone into their designated classroom 'blue box' at the beginning of the day. The 'blue box' is then taken and stored in the office until the end of the day when it is delivered back the classrooms. Children can then take their phone from the 'blue box' as they leave school.

Please refer to the school's E-Safety policy for further detail/guidance on the use of the internet.

Other prejudice related incidents

This includes the wearing of specific badges, T-shirts carrying slogans or bringing discriminatory literature into school; attempting to recruit others to organisations and groups that promote any form of prejudice.

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Normal Peer Conflict or Bullying?

The harm caused by bullying/prejudice should not be underestimated. It can cause considerable stress to children, to the extent that it affects their health and development.

Normal Peer Conflict or Bullying?	
Normal Peer Conflict	Bullying
Equal power or friends.	Imbalance of power – not friends.
Happens occasionally.	Repeated unwelcome actions.
Accidental or not pre-meditated harm.	Deliberate harm or the threat of physical or emotional harm.
Not seeking power or attention.	Seeking power, control of material things.
Generally not trying to get something.	May attempt to get material things or power.
Remorse – will take responsibility.	No remorse – may blame the victim.

At St Augustine's:

- We strive to create an atmosphere in school where all members of the school community respect each other.
- We are a "Listening School"
- Direct teaching – PSHE (personal, social and health education), Themed Weeks, Collective Worship and informal discussions.
- Promotion of national events such as "Anti-bullying Week"
- Children feel valued, by means of teaching through the curriculum and displays; recognition of achievement; rewards and celebrating our diversity
- Through School Council and regular pupil surveys, our children feel they have a voice and that their opinion matters.
- We ensure that consistent behaviour management and high-quality activities are available at playtimes and lunchtimes.
- We share information with parents and work closely with them when incidents of bullying/prejudice occur.
- We have dedicated 'Play Leaders' who have been specifically chosen, trained and supported by staff to host games and events at lunchtimes. They have been encouraged to play inclusive games for all, giving all children the opportunity to play together without fear of isolation, intimidation or bullying.

All members of the school community follow this policy consistently.

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Signs and Symptoms of Bullying

A child may indicate by signs or behaviour that he or she is being bullied. School staff and parents should be aware of these possible signs and that they should investigate if a child:

- refuses to go outside at break times or refuses to stay at school for school dinners
- requests to change classes or school
- behaves immaturely, i.e. the child reverts to a previous behaviour such as thumb-sucking
- becomes withdrawn, clingy, moody, uncooperative or non-communicative
- finds it difficult to concentrate or school performance deteriorates
- is frightened of walking to or from school/ begs to be driven to school
- changes their usual routine – time leaving or route taken to/from school
- is reluctant to go to school
- becomes secretive, withdrawn, anxious or lacking in confidence
- feels ill in the morning
- comes home with clothes torn or books damaged
- has possessions "go missing"
- has unexplained cuts or bruises
- becomes aggressive, disruptive or unreasonable
- is bullying other children or siblings
- is nervous or jumpy when a text/ social media message or email is received
- gives improbable excuses for any of the above.

This is by no means an exhaustive list and many of these behaviours could indicate other problems but bullying should be considered a possibility and should always be investigated by staff.

Responding to Bullying or Prejudice Related Incidents

All bullying and prejudiced behaviour should be treated as a serious matter. It is crucially important that the member of staff who first encounters the incident shows firm disapproval and takes positive action to deal with the situation. A failure to respond could be seen as condoning prejudiced behaviour and could discourage pupils and parents / carers from reporting incidents and sharing their concerns with staff.

Prompt, appropriate and consistent responses from all members of staff can encourage pupils who might otherwise suffer in silence to report incidents and share their concerns and worries. In dealing with the perpetrators of prejudice related bullying or other discriminatory incidents, **it is important that it is the behaviour that is disapproved of and not the pupils themselves.**

Parents, who feel that a recurring incident of bullying has occurred, should contact the Class Teacher or Head teacher either by email, phone or in person.

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Effective action could include:

- drawing the perpetrator to one side and explaining clearly and calmly why the behaviour was wrong and hurtful or offensive;
- seeking an assurance that the pupil understands why the behaviour was wrong and that it will not be repeated;
- correcting any misinformation that was used as part of the prejudice related behaviour;
- where an assurance is forthcoming, asking the pupil to apologise for his or her action, where possible mediate between the children or young people;
- investigating the background or particular circumstances which led up to the incident – witnesses should be sought to verify the account;
- referring the matter, where appropriate, to a senior member of staff for disciplinary action;
- arranging a meeting or informing the parents / carers in order to make it clear to them that such behaviour is unacceptable and that further disciplinary action will be taken if there is any repetition (if such behaviour appears to be condoned or encouraged by the parents, staff should refer the parents to the headteacher) ;
- in appropriate cases, considering the use of positive strategies other than sanctions and punishment that might help and encourage the pupil to overcome his or her prejudices and to desist from engaging in similar behaviour in the future;
- checking the recording and reporting data to see if the pupil has been involved in any earlier incidents. If this is the case, a senior member of staff should meet with the parents / carers of the perpetrator. The meeting should enlist the support of these parents and carers to stop such behaviour and to stress that a similar incident in the future could have serious consequences for the child. In some cases, this could lead to a fixed-term or permanent exclusion and possible action by the police if the aggrieved victim took action against the perpetrator.
- “Safe to Learn: Homophobic Bullying”, contains detailed, step-by-step approaches for dealing with homophobic incidents, including scripted responses for how to support a pupil who has been the victim of homophobic bullying as well as ideas for how to address homophobic bullying.
- Implementation of the school's Behaviour Policy.
- Consideration of whether any safeguarding issues have arisen and possible implementation of the school's Safeguarding Policy.

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Recording and Reporting Procedures

Members of school staff may not be sure when they should record an incident as prejudice-related following remarks made by children related to ethnicity, culture, religion, disability or homophobia. The following questions may be helpful to assist this decision.

If the answer to any of the following 3 questions is 'Yes' then the incident should be recorded:

1. was anyone offended/hurt/upset by the remark?
2. would a representative of the community concerned have been offended? (If in doubt record)
3. was the way the remark was formulated or delivered derogatory, mocking or negative about the group or individual or character concerned? (if in doubt record)

Every incident that is perceived to be based on prejudice should be reported and recorded, however minor it may appear at the time.

- All bullying or prejudice related incidents must be recorded on MyConcern and handed to a designated safeguarding person.
- Staff should record this incident on Arbor, mentioning the relevant children, whilst also dealing with the situation as stated above.
- The Headteacher will be responsible for overseeing the reporting procedure and monitoring the incidence of prejudice related incidents on a regular basis.
- The information provided by these records will be reported annually to governors by the Headteacher and provide data for the annual statistical return to the Local Authority.

Following up an incident

It is often helpful, once the immediate situation has been dealt with, for staff to reflect on the incident, to consider what further action may be necessary in respect of the perpetrator and victim and to see if there are any lessons to be learned from the experience.

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Effective action could include:

- Considering the actions of the perpetrator to see if there were any underlying causes which may have prompted this behaviour;
- Checking data records to see if the pupil has been involved in any previous incidents. If this is the case, a senior member of staff should meet with the parents of the perpetrator, seek their support in stopping such behaviour and make them aware that a similar incident in the future could have serious consequences for their child;
- Monitoring the perpetrator's future behaviour;
- Considering which other members of staff need to be informed, for example, the Headteacher, phase leader or class teacher;
- Checking to see if there are any times in the school day, or any places in the school, where pupils feel particularly vulnerable. If so, try to find ways of overcoming this. For example, if incidents have occurred in the playground, check that staff are on the alert for such behaviour at lunch and break times;
- Considering if it would be beneficial to discuss the issues further in a school assembly or class discussion. This requires careful judgement. It may expose the victim in an embarrassing and uncomfortable way and could be treated inappropriately by other pupils. On the other hand, it may be an opportunity to develop positive attitudes towards diversity. This will help pupils to understand the damaging effects of prejudice and the determination of the school to combat this.
- Asking all members of staff to keep a protective eye on a known victim(s) of prejudice and taking positive steps over time to build up their trust and to encourage them to report any further incidents;
- Making sure all members of staff are alert for other pupils who may be suffering in silence;
- Asking all members of staff to keep a watchful eye on known perpetrators to prevent further prejudiced incidents.

Consequences & Support

Consequences for the inappropriate actions of the perpetrator are important but may not prevent further incidents of bullying. It is, therefore, essential that the perpetrator is helped to understand the impact of their actions; the reasons for their actions and then given strategies and support to prevent recurrence. This may require long-term in-school support and the involvement of external agencies.

Consequences may include:

- A red card being given
- Contacting parents for a meeting in school

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- Loss of break time
- Internal seclusion
- The use of the seclusion centre (City Learning Centre)
- Fixed term exclusion

The disciplinary steps above will be taken as appropriate and will be discussed with all relevant adults, parents/carers and the children involved.

Support for the victim may include:

1:1 time with an adult to help build self-esteem; peer support; a “trusted” adult at lunchtime who is fully aware of the issues and can offer protection; regular home-school contact between parents and teachers; “open-door” policy for parents with class teacher and senior leaders; access to nurture group facilities.

Support for the perpetrator may include:

1:1 time with an adult to help build self-esteem and social skills; social skills group work, peer support; a “trusted” adult at lunchtime who is fully aware of the issues and is able to rapidly intervene in any incident; regular home-school contact between parents and teachers; “open-door” policy for parents with class teacher and senior leaders; access to nurture facilities; pastoral support programme if a risk of permanent exclusion.

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