

St Luke's Primary School



Counter-Bullying Policy 2023

“Everyone who works with children should do what is in the best interests of the child.”

Article 3 United Nations Rights of the Child

At St Luke's School, we are committed to providing a caring, friendly and safe environment for all of our pupils so they can learn in a relaxed and secure atmosphere. We believe that everybody has the right to be treated with respect, and that bullying of any kind is unacceptable at our school. If bullying does occur, all pupils should be able to tell and know that incidents will be dealt with promptly and effectively. We recognise the importance of being alert to signs of bullying and racial harassment, of dealing firmly with all signs of such behaviour and of taking action based on clear rules which are backed by appropriate sanctions and systems to protect and support victims. We are a TELLING school. This means that anyone who knows that bullying is happening is expected to tell the staff.

Aims

At St Luke's School we aim to:

- Teach our children the meaning of bullying and to ensure that we share a clear definition of what bullying is.
- Ensure that pupils learn in a supportive, caring and safe environment without fear of being bullied
- Ensure that children and staff realise that any form of bullying is unacceptable and that such behaviour will be dealt with appropriately.
- Create a community in which everyone feels safe and secure.
- Encourage open communication relating to feelings, attitudes and behaviour.
- Provide a clear procedure for dealing with reports of bullying.

Definition of 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”.

Bullying results in pain and distress to the victim. We recognise that bullying can take many forms:

- **Emotional** - being unfriendly, excluding, tormenting (e.g. hiding books, threatening gestures)
 - **Physical** - pushing, kicking, hitting, punching or any use of violence
 - **Racist** - racial taunts, graffiti, gestures
 - **Sexual** - unwanted physical contact or sexually abusive comments
 - **Homophobic** - because of, or focussing on, the issue of sexuality
 - **Verbal** - name-calling, sarcasm, spreading rumours, teasing
 - **Cyber** - All areas of internet, such as email and internet chat room misuse Mobile threats by text messaging and calls, Misuse of associated technology, i.e. camera and video facilities.

Goals and Objectives of this Policy

Our Counter-Bullying Policy works in conjunction with our behaviour policy, and aims to achieve the following:

- All children feeling safe and able to learn, play, and enjoy the company of others
- All children treated fairly, with respect, and dignity
- All children able to be heard and their emotional concerns taken seriously

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- All children aware of what bullying is and is not, and able to report their concerns in the knowledge that action will be taken where appropriate.

We aim to achieve this by:

- Taking positive action to prevent bullying from occurring through a clear school policy on personal and social development
- Showing commitment to overcoming bullying by practising zero tolerance
- Informing pupils and parents of the school's expectations and fostering a productive partnership, which helps maintain a bully-free environment
- Making staff aware of their role in fostering the knowledge and attitudes which will be required to achieve the above aims.

All teaching and non-teaching staff should know what the school policy is on bullying, and follow it when bullying is reported.

All pupils and parents should know what the school policy is on bullying, and what they should do if bullying arises.

As a school we take bullying seriously. Pupils and parents should be assured that they will be supported when bullying is reported.

Approaches and Procedures

Everyone at St. Luke's School believes that reports of bullying must be given full attention in order to reach an acceptable solution. Children must be aware that it is the responsibility of everyone to report acts of bullying as soon as they arise and to recognise that to be seen to act is as important as taking action, since silence and secrecy nurture bullying.

Teachers introduce the term "bullying" into PSHE lessons from Year 2 in order to establish a clear understanding of what bullying is and to encourage open communication. We also address the issue during counter-bullying week every year.

As a community we strive to ensure that those children most at risk from bullying are identified.

Strategies Employed to Address Issues of Bullying

Procedures

1. Report bullying incidents to staff
2. In cases of serious bullying, the incidents will be recorded by staff
3. In serious cases parents should be informed and will be asked to come to a meeting to discuss the problem
4. If necessary and appropriate, police will be consulted
5. The bullying behaviour or threats of bullying must be investigated and the bullying stopped quickly
6. Support will be made to help the bully (bullies) recognise and change their behaviour – this will usually be done in tandem with the class teacher and a Well-being/ELSA facilitator
7. Support will be made to the victim(s) of bullying to help build self-esteem – this will usually be done in tandem with the class teacher and a Well-being/ELSA facilitator

Outcomes

- The bully (bullies) will be asked to genuinely apologise. Other consequences may follow. The Behaviour Policy should be referred to as it outlines our sanctions system.
- In serious cases, suspension or even exclusion will be considered

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- If possible, the pupils will be reconciled
- After the incident/incidents have been investigated and dealt with, each case will be monitored to ensure repeated bullying does not take place.

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 the class teacher immediately. Parents have the responsibility to support the school's counter-bullying policy and to actively encourage their child to be a positive member of the school.

Prevention

- St Luke's School acts to prevent and counter bullying through a raft of explicit counter-bullying interventions alongside more implicit positive behaviour reinforcement activities. As outlined in our Behaviour Policy, we place a great deal of emphasis on encouraging and supporting children to treat each other and adults with respect and kindness. We model and reward considerate behaviour towards others and make clear the values of respect by which we operate at St Luke's School.
- Children are helped to take responsibility for their actions and, just as importantly, to make amends for any misdemeanour. By doing so, the likelihood of bullying behaviour is diminished, as children are called to account for their actions, as well as secure in the knowledge that if they have experienced bullying by others, action is taken by the school.
- St Luke's School recognises the UK national Counter-bullying Week annually – raising awareness of what bullying is and isn't, and how to respond to bullying. Teaching teams reinforce learning throughout the year through weekly PHSE and Circle Time sessions with their class.

Assessment and Recording

When an incidence of bullying is reported the class teacher will:

- Listen carefully and attentively to what is being reported, record the information and inform the Head Teacher.
- Monitor the situation and keep a careful record of developments.

If the bullying continues:

- Seek further support from the Head Teacher.
- Inform the parents of the bully/ies and the victim.

(Parents may be involved from the outset according to the degree of seriousness of the bullying.)

- Continue to monitor the situation to ensure that it is completely eradicated.

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Appendix

The 'No Blame' Approach to Bullying

Taking the view that bullying is an interaction which establishes group identity, dominance and status at the expense of another, then it is only by the development of 'higher values' such as empathy, consideration and unselfishness that the bully is likely to relinquish his/her behaviour and function differently in a social setting. If the preventative policy depends upon policing the environment, forbidding the behaviour, encouraging the victims and punishing the perpetrators, then no lasting change can be expected.

When bullying has been observed or reported, the following steps may be taken by a designated member of staff.

Step 1: interview with the victim

The teacher talks to the victim about his feelings. H/she does not question him/her about the incident but does need to know who was involved. The victim must agree that this procedure can go ahead.

Step 2: convene a meeting with the people involved.

The teacher meets all involved, including the bystanders or colluders who joined in but did not initiate any bullying.

Step 3: explain the problem

The teacher describes how the victim is feeling and might use a poem, a piece of writing or a drawing to emphasise his/her distress. At no time does the teacher discuss the details of the incidents or allocate blame to the group.

Step 4: share responsibility

The teacher does not attribute the blame but states that he/she knows that the group is responsible for doing something about it.

Step 5: 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 teacher gives some positive responses but does not go on to extract a promise of improved behaviour.

Step 6: leave it up to them

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

Step 7: meet them again

About a week later the teacher discusses with each child, including the victim, how things have been going. This allows the teacher to monitor the bullying and keeps the children involved in the process.

The no-blame approach may be helpful when the bullies have feelings of empathy and can imagine how the victim must feel. When this does not apply, or in very serious cases of bullying, this approach may not be useful.