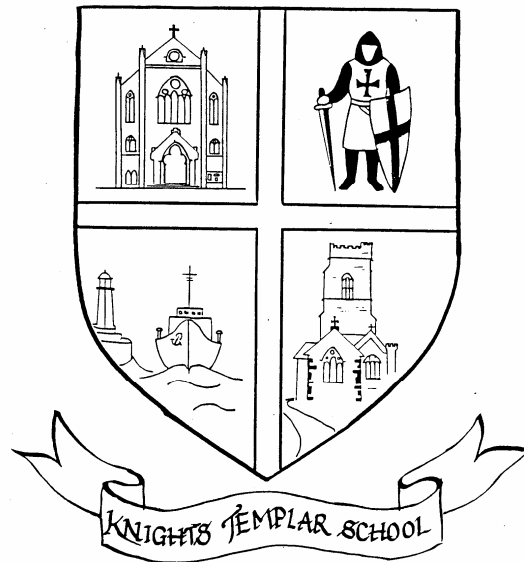


*Knights Templar C of E and Methodist
First School*



*Anti Bullying
Policy*

Date approved ~ November 2010

Date for review ~ November 2011

We believe that bullying behaviour is totally unacceptable.

Aims

In our school:

- all children and adults should feel safe
- all children and adults are to be treated fairly, with respect and dignity
- reports of bullying behaviour will be treated seriously, investigated and followed up

The Nature of Bullying

Bullying is generally accepted to be:

- the calculated and deliberate intention to hurt someone else
- repetitive “So they never leave you alone.” (*School Council Quote*)
- difficult for victims to defend themselves against – the bully finds something about the victim they can exploit

Bullying can take many forms:

- physical – hitting and punching, kicking, pinching, spitting, hair pulling, roughness in games, taking or damaging belongings
- verbal – name calling, insults, making offensive remarks, including any remarks about someone’s physical appearance, disability, race, religion or sexual orientation
- indirect – spreading nasty stories about someone, deliberately and frequently excluding someone from social groups, leaving people out of games, making someone the subject of malicious rumours

It has been defined as “*the purposeful selective desire to psychologically control a situation so that another person is hurt.*” (Bill Rogers)

Name calling is the most common direct form of bullying. Pupils can be called nasty names because of their ethnic origin, nationality or colour; sexual orientation; or some form of disability. They can also be called such names as ‘boffin’ or ‘swot’. (See the Equal Opportunities Policy and the Racial Equality Policy).

‘Bullying – don’t suffer in silence’ states that in primary schools, most bullying takes place in the playground. Both boys and girls bully others and children who bully others can come from any kind of family, regardless of social class or cultural background.

Usually one pupil starts bullying a victim, but other pupils may be present.

A bully looks for a target and finds something about the victim they can exploit. A non-assertive response to bullying comments or gestures (the victim looks upset, worried, fearful etc.) lets the bullies know that they have succeeded. Bullying has to be confronted if it is going to stop.

The behaviour of certain children can contribute to bullying, though this in no way justifies it. Some children find it hard to concentrate in class, may be hyperactive, or behave in ways that irritate others. They may get angry easily and fight back when attacked or even slightly provoked. **No-one deserves to be bullied.**

Whole school Strategies to combat Bullying

Curricular approaches

The Curriculum should be used to raise awareness about bullying and the Anti-Bullying Policy. Pupils should be taught how to manage their relations with others constructively. Improving social skills can include the teaching of conflict resolution and stress management. Issues about bullying can be addressed in subjects such as English, Drama, Religious Education, PHSE (SEAL) etc. Understanding for victims can be increased and children can suggest ways of dealing with bullying and what can be done to prevent it.

Co-operative work helps children to learn to work together on shared tasks, helping one another and managing conflicts within the group.

Circle Times create a safe place to explore issues of concern, allow children to focus on their own feelings and those of others and teach them to tolerate others' views.

Pupil mentors – members of the School Council are keen to promote the idea of a small team of mentors, to work in the playground in particular. Mentors receive on-going training in non-aggressive, conflict resolution skills. They act as neutral go-betweens in disputes and help their peers to come to a solution, or refer the problem to a duty teacher. The mentors have worked very effectively and the children chosen have enjoyed the work.

Recognising Signs of Bullying

Any child can be bullied and although none of these characteristics can excuse it, certain factors can make bullying more likely:

- lacking friends in school
- being shy
- an over-protective family environment
- being from a different racial or ethnic group to the majority
- being different in some obvious respect
- having special educational needs or a disability
- behaving inappropriately, intruding or being a “nuisance”
- possessing expensive toys

Victims may be reluctant to attend school. They may be more anxious and insecure than others, having fewer friends and often feeling unhappy and lonely. They can suffer from low self-esteem, looking upon themselves as failures.

Pupils' understanding varies with age. Infants may confuse bullying with fighting and nasty experiences; juniors develop a more mature understanding. The school will take action despite any difficulties in identifying bullying in 4 to 7 year olds.

Families are told about bullying more often than teachers, but in some cases teachers and parents need to take steps to uncover it. When victims do tell teachers or parents, the outcome is generally positive, but victims, having told someone, need help and support and must be taken seriously.

We want children to tell us if they have a problem with bullying behaviour and what they say will always be taken seriously.

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Parents' Concerns

Parental support is a key element in our Anti-Bullying Policy. Any parent contacting the school with a concern about bullying will be listened to seriously. The first point of contact for the parent is the child's class teacher and the teacher should:

- recognise that the parent may be angry or upset
- keep an open mind – bullying can be difficult to detect, and a lack of staff awareness does not mean that the bullying is not happening
- make it clear that we are very concerned and that something will be done
- explain the agreed procedures and policy and ensure that these are followed

Procedures for Dealing with Reported Incidents of Bullying:

- never ignore suspected bullying
- listen carefully to all accounts – several pupils saying the same does not necessarily mean they are telling the truth
- do not make premature assumptions
- keep a record of the behaviour on an Incident sheet (Any name calling or incidents involving race must also be logged on a Commission for Racial Equality form)
- keep written records of conversations with parents concerning any incidents of bullying
- if investigations indicate that bullying is taking place, the head teacher or designated senior teacher should be informed
- the class teacher and/or senior teacher will speak to the children involved, separately in the first instance
- the child being bullied will be supported - initially, he or she will be encouraged to be assertive and to speak firmly to the bully, "Stop doing that. I don't like it."
- teachers will seek ways to boost the self esteem of the bullied child
- the bullying child will be told to stop the behaviour, and it will be made clear that the victim will report any further incidents
- the children can be brought together if appropriate and a plan of action agreed
- the children will have a few days to put the plan into action and a date made to meet again to discuss progress
- if this is successful, the children will be monitored regularly, by the class teacher or senior teacher, to ensure that matters have been resolved – this will involve speaking to the child being bullied and the bullying child
- Where there is persistent or violent bullying, with bullying children not responding to preventative strategies, then parents will be informed and asked to come into school, a plan of action agreed or a sanction applied

When a case of persistent bullying is referred to them, senior teachers should:

- ask for details and record the information
- keep records of conversations with parents
- speak to the children involved, as outlined previously
- make appointments with both sets of parents to explain actions and find out if the bullying has stopped
- follow up with staff and children to ensure that the appropriate action has been taken and that the school policy has been implemented

Sanctions will be applied fairly and consistently. They will include:

- "time out" from the class
- withdrawal of break or lunchtime privileges
- withholding participation in any school trip or sports events that are not an essential part of the curriculum – loss of treats
- fixed term exclusion

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Where other strategies do not resolve the problem, permanent exclusion may be considered, especially in the most serious and persistent cases and where violence is involved.

Bullying outside the school premises

Schools can now take action when instances of bad behaviour or bullying off the school premises are reported to members of staff. It is clear that bullying can take place outside the gates or on the journey to and from school. **Children must still be encouraged to tell someone.** A range of steps will be taken:

- talking to the local police about problems on the streets
- talking to the Head teacher of another school whose pupils are bullying off the premises
- mapping safe routes to school and discussing them with parents and children
- talking to children about how to avoid or handle bullying outside the school premises
- the application of sanctions outlined above

Monitoring and Evaluating the Policy

Monitoring by a senior member of staff will identify progress and enable follow-up, showing whether the policy is effective. The policy should be reviewed at least once a year and modified as necessary, in consultation with parents, governors, members of the School Council and all members of staff.

Approval of this policy

Signed:

Position held:

Date:

Bullying – information for parents and families

Bullying behaviour includes:

- name calling and nasty teasing
- threats and extortion
- physical violence
- damage to belongings
- leaving children out of social activities deliberately and frequently
- spreading malicious rumours

Most definitions of bullying consider it to be:

- deliberately hurtful
- repeated often over a period of time
- difficult for victims to defend themselves against

Parents and families have an important part to play in helping the school to deal with bullying.

1. Discourage your child from using bullying behaviour at home. Show how to resolve difficult situations without using violence or aggression. The School has information on various approaches to conflict resolution.
2. Ask to see the school's anti-bullying policy.
3. Watch for signs that your child is being bullied or is bullying others. Contact the school if you are worried.
4. Encourage your child to tell someone if they feel threatened in any way or have been subjected to any of the behaviours outlined.

If your child has been bullied

- talk to your child about it calmly
- make a note of what your child says – who was involved; how often the bullying has occurred; where it happened; what has happened
- reassure your child that telling you about the bullying was the right thing to do
- explain that any further incidents should be reported to your child's teacher
- make an appointment to see your child's teacher
- tell the teacher about the problems your child is experiencing

Talking to teachers about bullying

- try to stay calm – bear in mind that the teacher may have no idea that your child is being bullied or may have heard conflicting accounts of an incident
- be as specific as possible about what your child says has happened – give dates, places, and names of other children involved
- make a note of what action the school intends to take
- ask if there is anything you can do to help your child or the school
- stay in touch with the school – let them know if things improve as well as if problems continue

Teachers and parents can teach children how to stand up to bullies in an assertive way. Learning to be assertive is a skill that needs to be practised, emphasising, for example, how to look assertive rather than aggressive, how to think and feel 'strong', how to use specific words and phrases to use to convey one's rights, how and when to walk away.

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Children will not always have an adult protector to help them. When children start to talk, look, think and act assertively, they often feel better and convey strength of purpose. Children need to be 'empowered'.

It is important that children tell an adult if they have witnessed a bullying incident, or suspect that bullying is taking place, both in school and also out of school when they may be playing with friends.

If you think your concerns are not being addressed

- discuss your concerns with the parent governor
- make an appointment to see the head teacher
- if this does not help, ask to see the Complaints Procedure
- contact local or national parent support groups for advice

If your child is bullying other children

Children sometimes bully others because:

- they don't know it's wrong
- they are copying older brothers or sisters or other people in the family they admire
- they haven't learnt other, better ways of mixing with their school friends
- their friends encourage them to bully
- they are going through a difficult time and are acting out aggressive feelings
- they are being bullied themselves

To stop your child from bullying others:

- talk to your child, explaining that bullying is unacceptable and makes others unhappy
- discourage any members of your family from bullying behaviour or from using aggression or force to get what they want
- show your child how to join in with other children without bullying
- make an appointment to see your child's class teacher; explain about the problems your child is experiencing; discuss how you and the school can stop your child from bullying others
- check with your child how things are going at school on a regular basis
- give your child lots of praise and encouragement when he or she co-operates or is kind to other children