St Chad's CofE Nursery and Infant School

Anti-Bullying Policy

School Leader: K Leach

Link Governor: C Lightfoot

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Statement of intent

At St Chad's CofE Nursery and Infant School we know that all children have the right to learn and work in an environment where they feel safe and which is free from harassment and bullying (United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child; Article 19).

We place the safety and well-being of our children at the heart of everything we do. As an Attachement Aware school, we prioritise building positive relationships between staff, children, and families. We aim to create a secure base for our children, where they feel valued, respected, and supported. By fostering a sense of belonging and trust, we can create an environment where children can develop healthy attachments.

At the heart of our approach is our wellbeing and 'character' curriculum which is taught throughout school, from Nursery to Year 2. We incorporate social-emotional learning into our curriculum to support the development of empathy, self-awareness, and positive relationships. We regularly teach and model what is, and is not, respectful behaviour, so everyone understands what is, and is not OK.

As a school we do not underestimate the impact that bullying can have on a person's life. It can cause high levels of distress, affecting young people's well-being, academic and social development right through into adulthood. Therefore, we believe children and families should have the confidence that they will be listened to and that any bullying that is reported will be dealt with promptly and effectively.

Legal framework

This policy has due regard to all relevant legislation and statutory guidance including, but not limited to, the following:

- Education and Inspections Act 2006
- Equality Act 2010
- Protection from Harassment Act 1997
- Malicious Communications Act 1988
- Public Order Act 1986
- Communications Act 2003
- Human Rights Act 1998
- Crime and Disorder Act 1998
- Education Act 2011
- DfE (2017) 'Preventing and tackling bullying'
- DfE (2018) 'Mental health and wellbeing provision in schools'
- DfE (2024) 'Keeping children safe in education 2024'

This policy operates in conjunction with the following school policies:

- Relational Behaviour Policy
- DDAT Child Protection and Safeguarding Policy
- SEND and Inclusion Policy
- Social, Emotional and Mental Health (SEMH) Policy
- Relationships and Health Education Policy
- DDAT Suspension and Exclusion Policy

Definitions

We recognise that many children and young people will experience conflict in their relationships with other children and young people and as a school we are committed to developing empathy and the skills to manage relationships in a peaceful way that does not harm others.

For the purpose of this policy, "bullying" is defined as persistent behaviour by an individual or group with the intention of verbally, physically, or emotionally harming another person or group. Bullying is generally characterised by:

- Repetition: Incidents are not one-offs; they are frequent and happen over an extended period of time.
- Intent: The perpetrator means to cause verbal, physical or emotional harm; it is not accidental.
- Targeting: Bullying is generally targeted at a specific individual or group.
- Power imbalance: Whether real or perceived, bullying is generally based on unequal power relations.

Children's needs and behaviour change as they get older. Every child will face challenges and at times experience strong emotions which impact good social interaction. As children's language and communication skills are still developing, through their behaviour they might be communicating that:

- They're overwhelmed
- They can't manage something
- They don't understand what's happening

Therefore, most children will at some point overstep a boundary and will need reminding about agreements and expectations.

All toddlers test limits and have frequent episodes of dysregulated behaviour ('meltdowns'/tantrums). . Research shows that a child's brain is still developing during this period, so there are limits to how much they're able to control their emotions.

School-age children are constantly learning and exploring their world. They may have lots of questions as they start to form their own views on issues. As they move towards being more independent they may seem to push boundaries and become more challenging. This behaviour (including the occasional falling out with a friend) is not bullying: it is a necessary part of growing up.

It is bullying if it is done **several times on purpose (STOP).**

Vulnerable pupils are more likely to be the targets of bullying due to the attitudes and behaviours some young people have towards those who are different from themselves. Vulnerable pupils may include, but are not limited to:

- Pupils who are adopted.
- Pupils suffering from a health problem.
- Pupils with caring responsibilities.
- Pupils from socioeconomically disadvantaged backgrounds.

Pupils with certain characteristics are also more likely to be targets of bullying, including, but not limited to:

- Pupils who are LGBTQ+, or perceived to be LGBTQ+.
- Black, Asian and minority ethnic (BAME) pupils.
- Pupils with SEND.

Types of bullying
Many kinds of behaviour can be considered bullying, and bullying can be related to almost anything. Teasing another child because of their appearance, religion, ethnicity, gender, sexual orientation, home life, culture, or SEND are some of the types of bullying that can occur.

Bullying is acted out through the following mediums:
- Verbal

- Physical
- Emotional
- Online (cyberbullying)

- **Racist bullying:** Bullying another person based on their ethnic background or skin colour. Racist bullying is a criminal offence under the Crime and Disorder Act 1998 and Public Order Act 1986.
- **Homophobic and biphobic bullying:** Bullying another person because of their actual or perceived sexual orientation.
- **Transphobic bullying:** Bullying based on another person's gender identity or gender presentation, or for not conforming to dominant gender roles.
- **Sexist bullying:** Bullying based on sexist attitudes expressed in a way to demean, intimidate or harm another person because of their sex or gender. Sexist bullying may sometimes be characterised by inappropriate sexual behaviours.
- **Sexual bullying:** Bullying behaviour that has a physical, psychological, verbal or non-verbal sexual dimension or dynamic that subordinates, humiliates or intimidates another person. This is commonly underpinned by sexist attitudes or gender stereotypes.
- **Ableist bullying:** Bullying behaviour that focusses on another person's disability or support needs; this can include mocking the individual's disability or their needs, using derogatory words or slurs in relation to an individual's disability, or deliberately excluding an individual because of their disability.
- **Prejudicial bullying:** Bullying based on prejudices directed towards specific characteristics or experiences, e.g. religion or mental health issues.
- **Relational bullying:** Bullying that primarily constitutes of excluding, isolating and ostracising someone – usually through verbal and emotional bullying.
- **Socioeconomic bullying:** Bullying based on prejudices against the perceived social status of the victim, including, but not limited to, their economic status, their parents' occupations, their health or nutrition level, or the perceived "quality" of their clothing or belongings.

Roles and responsibilities

The governing board is responsible for:
- Evaluating and reviewing this policy to ensure that it does not discriminate against any pupils on the basis of their protected characteristics or backgrounds.
- The overall implementation and monitoring of this policy.
- Ensuring that all governors are appropriately trained regarding safeguarding and child protection at induction.
- Ensuring that the school adopts a tolerant and open-minded policy towards difference.
- Ensuring the school is inclusive.
- Analysing any bullying data to establish patterns and reviewing this policy in light of these.
- Ensuring the DSL has the appropriate status and authority within the school to carry out the duties of the role.
- Appointing a safeguarding link governor who will work with the DSL to ensure the policies and practices relating to safeguarding, including the prevention of cyberbullying, are being implemented effectively.
- Ensuring that pupils are taught how to keep themselves and others safe, including online.

The headteacher is responsible for:
- Reviewing and amending this policy, accounting for new legislation and government guidance, and using staff experience of dealing with bullying incidents in previous years to improve procedures.
- Keeping a log on MyConcern of all reported incidents, including which type of bullying has occurred, to allow for proper analysis of the data collected.

- Analysing the data in the bullying record at termly intervals to identify trends, so that appropriate measures to tackle them can be implemented.
- Arranging appropriate training for staff members.

The Welfare Officer is responsible for:
- Monitoring all reported incidents on MyConcern and alerting the headteacher regarding any incidents of bullying.
- Correctly categorising reported incidents on Concern to allow for proper analysis of the data collected.
- Investigating any allegations of bullying and putting the school's Relational Behavoiur Policy into operation.
- Providing follow-up support after bullying incidents.
- Corresponding and meeting with parents where necessary.
- Providing a point of contact for parents where ongoing behaviour support is required.

Teachers are responsible for:
- Being alert to social dynamics in their class.
- Being available for pupils who wish to report bullying.
- Providing follow-up support after bullying incidents.
- Being alert to possible bullying situations, particularly exclusion from friendship groups, and informing the pupil's heads of year of such observations.
- Refraining from stereotyping when dealing with bullying.
- Understanding the composition of pupil groups, showing sensitivity to those who have been the victims of bullying.

All staff are responsible for:
- Reporting any instances of bullying on MyConcern once they have been approached by a pupil for support. This should be done immediately.

Parents are responsible for:
- Informing their child's head of year or form tutor if they have any concerns that their child is the victim of bullying or involving in bullying in anyway.
- Being watchful of their child's behaviour, attitude and characteristics and informing the relevant staff members of any changes.
- Discussing e-safety with their child and for reinforcing the school's the e-safety measures at home.

Pupils, where developmentally appropriate, are responsible for:
- Following the school's behaviour rules (Safe, Ready, Love)
- Informing a member of staff if they witness bullying or are a victim of bullying.
- Not making counter-threats if they are victims of bullying.
- Walking away from dangerous situations and avoiding involving other pupils in incidents.
- Abiding by the school's Relational Behaviour Policy.

Signs and symptoms of bullying
Staff will be alert to the following signs that may indicate a pupil is a victim of bullying:
- Being frightened to travel to or from school
- Unwillingness to attend school
- Repeated or persistent absence from school
- Becoming anxious or lacking confidence
- Saying that they feel ill repeatedly
- Decreased involvement in school work
- Leaving school with torn clothes or damaged possessions

- Missing possessions
- Asking for extra money or stealing
- Cuts or bruises
- Lack of appetite
- Lack of eye contact
- Becoming short tempered

Change in behaviour and attitude at home

Although the signs outlined above may not be due to bullying, they may be due to deeper social, emotional or mental health issues, so are still worth investigating. Pupils who display a significant number of these signs will be approached by a member of staff to determine the underlying issues causing this behaviour

Preventing bullying

We foster a clear understanding that bullying, in any form, is unacceptable. We believe that preventing bullying is the responsibility of our whole school community and when there are incidents of bullying we will work together to deal with the situation and to learn from what has happened.

In our school we do this by:

- Having a child friendly version of our policy.
- Prioritising building positive relationships between staff, children, and families.
- Adopting trauma-informed practices throughout school
- Creating a safe and predictable environment, with clear routines and expectations (*Safe, Ready, Love)*
- Utilising strategies such as trauma-sensitive language, de-escalation techniques, and trauma-informed interventions when needed.
- Promoting and celebrating our school values (*love, friendship, compassion and respect).*
- Using Collective Worship and PSHE lessons to ensure that pupils understand the differences between relational conflict and bullying.
- Incorporating social-emotional learning into our curriculum to support the development of emotional literacy, empathy, self-awareness, and positive relationships.
- Designing learning spaces that are sensory-friendly, considering factors such as lighting, noise levels, and visual stimuli.
- Providing sensory breaks and calming areas where children can regulate their sensory input.
- Providing target work with individuals and groups of children to support understanding and development of social skills e.g. social skills groups, ELSA (Emotional Literacy Support Assistant)
- Ensuring that we have a range of activities at playtime and lunchtime to promote positive play.
- Applying a restorative framework following an incident to help repair harm and support long-term change.
- Operating protective consequences alongside educational consequences, as outlined in the school's Relational Behaviour Policy.
- Giving pupils the opportunity to feedback on how safe and happy they feel at school through pupil questionnaires and School Council meetings.

Child-on-child abuse

The school has a zero-tolerance approach to all forms of child-on-child abuse, including sexual harassment and sexual violence.

All staff will:

- Be aware that pupils of any age and gender are capable of abusing their peers.
- Be aware that abuse can occur inside and outside of school settings.

- Be aware of the scale of harassment or abuse, and that just because it is not being reported does not mean it is not happening.
- Take all instances of child-on-child abuse equally seriously regardless of the characteristics of the perpetrators or victims.
- Never tolerate abuse as "banter" or "part of growing up", and will never justify sexual harassment, e.g. as "boys being boys", as this can foster a culture of unacceptable behaviours and one that risks normalising abuse.
- Be aware that child-on-child abuse can be manifested in many ways, including sexting, sexual harassment and assault, or initiation-type violence.
- Always challenge any harmful physical behaviour that is sexual in nature, such inappropriate touching. Dismissing or tolerating such behaviours risks normalising them.

Sexual harassment in particular can take many forms, including but not limited to:
- Telling sexual stories, making sexual remarks, or calling someone sexualised names.
- Sexual "jokes" or taunting.
- Deliberately brushing against someone.
- Displaying images or video of a sexual nature.
- Upskirting (this is a criminal offence).
- Online sexual harassment, e.g. creating or sharing sexual imagery, sexual comments on social media, or sexual coercion or threats.

The school's Safeguarding and Child Protection Policy outlines the school's stance on addressing child-on-child abuse, including sexual abuse, and the procedures in place will be adhered to if any instances are uncovered or disclosed. More information on the school's approach to preventing and managing instances of child-on-child abuse can be found within this policy.

Guidance for parents
Parents should not confront the bully or their parents. This can complicate the situation and distress the pupil. The school will deal directly with all children involved and their parents directly. Parents will be kept informed of any actions the school is taking. If parents feel that their concern has not been dealt with appropriately they should follow the school's complaints policy.

If your child has been bullied:
- Calmly talk with your child about his/her experiences.
- Make a note of what your child says including who was involved, how often the bullying has occurred, where it happened and what happened.
- Reassure your child that he/she has done the right thing to tell you about the bullying.
- Explain to your child that should any further incidents occur he/she should report them to a teacher immediately
- Make an appointment to see your child's teacher.
- Explain to the teacher the problems your child is experiencing.

When talking with teachers about bullying:
- Try to stay calm and 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.
- Discuss what action the school intends to take.
- Stay in touch with the school and let them know if things improve as well as if problems continue.

If your child is bullying others:

- Talk with your child and explain that what he/she is doing is unacceptable and makes other children unhappy.
- Discourage other members of your family from bullying behaviour or from using aggression or force to get what they want.
- Show your child how he/she can join in with other children without bullying.
- Make an appointment to see your child's teacher and explain the problems your child is experiencing as well as discussing how you can work together to stop him/her bullying others.
- Regularly check with your child how things are going at school.
- Give your child lots of praise and encouragement when he/she is co-operative or kind to other people.

School hosts an annual parent workshop on online safety at least once a year

Bullying outside of school
Staff will remain aware that bullying can happen both in and outside of school, and will ensure that they understand how to respond to reports of bullying that occurred outside school in line with the Safeguarding and Child Protection Policy.

The headteacher has a specific statutory power to sanction pupils for misbehaviour outside of the school premises. Section 89(5) of the Education and Inspections Act 2006 gives the headteacher the power to regulate pupils' conduct when they are not on school premises, and therefore, not under the lawful charge of a school staff member.

Where bullying outside school is reported to school staff, it will be investigated and acted upon. In all cases of misbehaviour or bullying, members of staff can only sanction the pupil on school premises, or elsewhere when the pupil is under the lawful control of the member of staff, e.g. on a school trip.
The headteacher is responsible for determining whether it is appropriate to notify the police of the action taken against a pupil. If the misbehaviour could be of a criminal nature, or poses a serious threat to a member of the public, the police will be informed

Record keeping
The DSL will ensure that robust records are kept with regard to all reported or otherwise uncovered incidents of bullying – this includes recording where decisions have been made, e.g. consequences, support, escalation of a situation and resolutions.

The headteacher and DSL will ensure that all decisions and actions recorded are reviewed on a regular basis for the purposes of:
- Identifying patterns of concerning, problematic or inappropriate behaviour on the part of certain pupils that may need to be handled, e.g. with pastoral support.
- Reflecting on whether cases could have been handled better and using these reflections to inform future practice.
- Considering whether there are wider cultural issues at play within the school, e.g. whether school culture facilitates discriminatory bullying by not adequately addressing instances, and planning to mitigate this.
- Considering whether prevention strategies could be strengthened based on any patterns in the cases that arise.
- Responding to any complaints about how cases have been handled.

Monitoring and review
We will review this policy at least once every three years as well as if incidents occur that suggest the need for review. The school uses the guidance by the Department for Education inform its action planning to prevent and tackle bullying.