



St Thomas of Canterbury Catholic Voluntary Academy

Anti-Bullying Policy

At St Thomas of Canterbury Catholic Voluntary Academy we encourage, in all members of the community, a shared sense of awe and wonder as we grow closer to God.

Our Purpose:

To nurture curiosity for every child, every day, within a community acting as a beacon of the Catholic faith.

All our children and young people have the right to go about their daily lives without the fear of being threatened, assaulted or harassed. No one should 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, behaviour, academic and social development right through into adulthood.

At St Thomas of Canterbury Catholic Voluntary Academy School, we are committed to providing a caring, nurturing and safe environment for all of our pupils so they can learn in a relaxed and secure atmosphere free from oppression and abuse.

Objectives Of This Policy

This policy first and foremost is to protect victims of bullying behaviour and identify those who carry it out. Furthermore, its aims are to ensure that:

- All governors, teaching and non-teaching staff, pupils and parents should have an understanding of what bullying behaviour is
- All governors and teaching and non-teaching staff should know what the school policy is on bullying behaviour, and follow it when bullying behaviour is reported
- All pupils and parents should know what the school policy is on bullying behaviour, and what they should do if bullying arises
- As a school we take bullying behaviour seriously. Pupils and parents should be assured that they will be supported when bullying behaviour is reported
- Bullying behaviour will not be tolerated

1. This policy contains clear statements about procedures to follow in instances of bullying and some strategies to help both the person who is a victim of bullying and the person who has bullied someone else.

2. This policy is linked to the Behaviour Policy that operates in school.

3. All staff are expected to follow the procedures outlined.
4. Parents are asked to have due regard to the advice offered and shared with them.
5. The policy has been written within the spirit of the school's Mission Statement and Aims as above.

Signs And Symptoms Of Bullying

The new definition of bullying, adopted by the Oxford and Cambridge Dictionaries, is:

New definition:

Bully n. a person who habitually seeks to harm or intimidate those whom they perceive as vulnerable

Many children and young people do not speak out when being bullied and may indicate by signs or behaviour that he or she is being bullied. Adults should be aware of these possible signs and should investigate if a child:

- is frightened of walking to or from school
- doesn't want to go on the school / public bus
- begs to be driven to school
- changes their usual routine
- is unwilling to go to school (school phobic)
- begins to truant
- becomes withdrawn anxious, or lacking in confidence
- starts stammering
- attempts or threatens self harm or runs away
- cries themselves to sleep at night or has nightmares
- uses excuses to miss school (headache, stomach ache etc)
- begins to suffer academically
- comes home with clothes torn or books damaged
- has possessions which are damaged or "go missing"
- asks for money or starts stealing money (to pay bully)
- has dinner or other monies continually "lost"
- has unexplained cuts or bruises or shows signs of being in a fight
- comes home starving (money / lunch has been stolen)
- becomes aggressive, disruptive or unreasonable
- is bullying other children or siblings
- changes their eating habits (stops eating or over eats)
- goes to bed earlier than usual
- is unable to sleep
- wets the bed
- is frightened to say what's wrong
- gives unlikely excuses for any of the above
- is afraid to use the internet or mobile phone
- is nervous and jumpy when a text message or email is received

6. Bullying can take many forms and could be:

- 6.1. **Physical** (pushing, kicking, pinching and other forms of violence, including threats)
- 6.2. **Verbal** (name calling, sarcasm, spreading rumours, persistent teasing)
- 6.3. **Emotional** (excluding, tormenting, e.g. hiding possessions, ridicule and humiliation)
- 6.4. **Status Bullying** (concerned with ranking, leadership)
- 6.5. **Racial Bullying** (ethnic origin, language or accents, skin colour)
- 6.6. Bullying based on disability, ability, gender, appearance or circumstance

- 6.7 **Face to Face** (in direct contact) or **Remote** (e.g. through cyber-bullying, written communication) or **Indirect** (e.g. by talking about others, posting messages that they can see)

The definition of remote also includes the use of Google Classroom.

It is necessary to draw a clear distinction between acts of bullying and everyday social contact that involves minor fallouts and disagreement. Children need to be prepared for this aspect of life by learning how to deal with minor matters themselves. Bossiness/assertiveness should not be confused with bullying, or being quiet with being a victim of bullying. Minor instances often arise out of misunderstandings, games and disagreements, rather than a deliberate targeting of an individual. We as a school endeavour to model and support children to deal with any of these situations sensitively, maturely and with respect and consideration for the other children and adults involved.

Bullying is NOT:

- An isolated incident
- A falling out
- A 'one off' disagreement

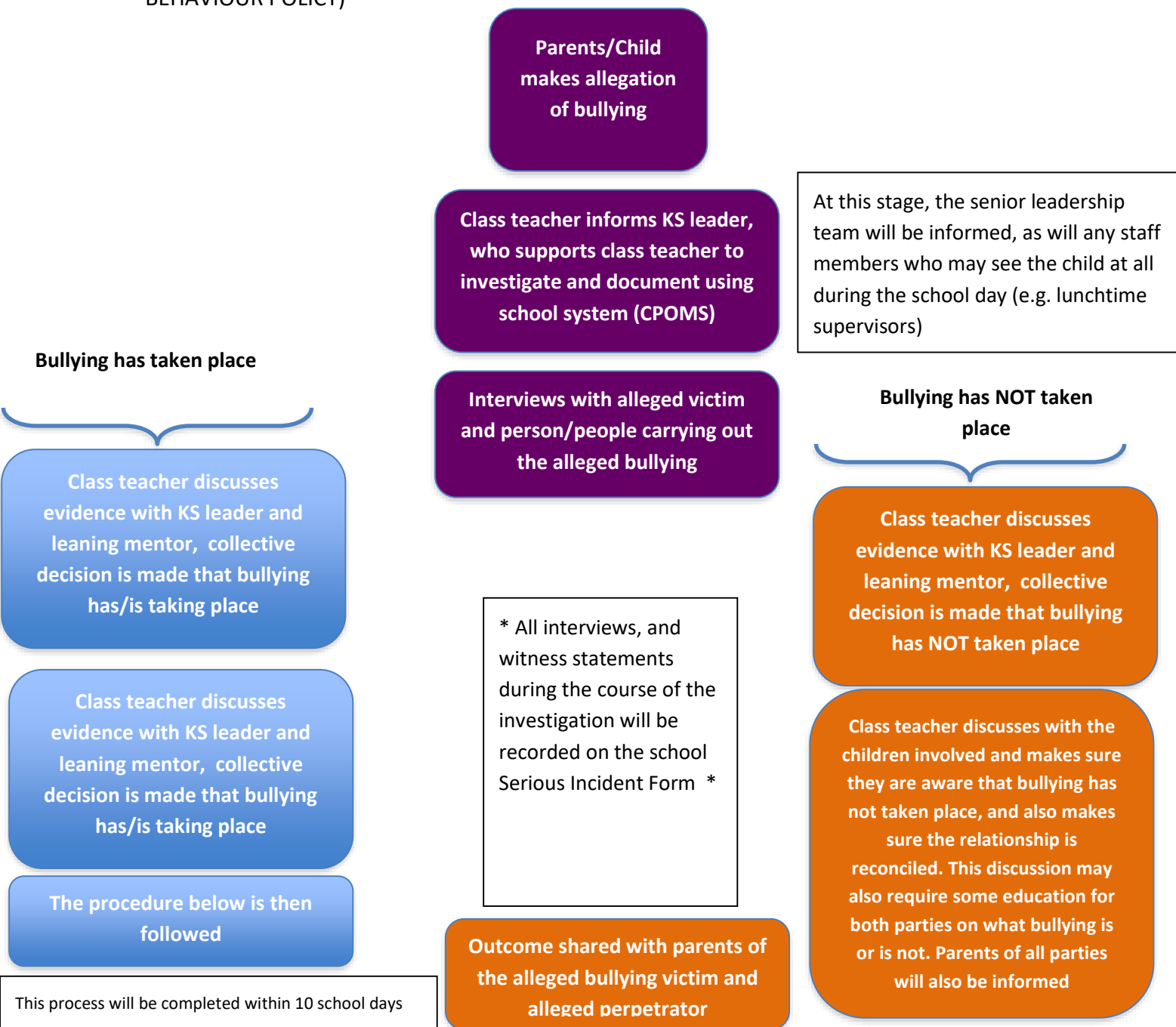
8. When distinguishing between these minor incidents and bullying a judgment needs to be made about:

- 8.1 The level of distress of the person affected
- 8.2 The severity of the act
- 8.3 Whether similar actions have occurred before
- 8.4 Whether there is a deliberate motive to cause distress and malicious intent by the perpetrator
- 8.5 The context in which the dispute took place
- 8.6 Whether the child's perception is accurate

9 Staff Responsibilities – Incidents reported in School by other Staff or Children

- 9.1 To take bullying seriously

- 9.2 To build a caring and co-operative ethos through the promotion, celebration and modelling of positive behaviour (See behaviour policy) and through modelling and implementation of the core values
- 9.3 To acknowledge and celebrate caring behaviour
- 9.4 To be an example of a caring person
- 9.5 To be vigilant – both in the classroom, playground and school
- 9.6 To investigate incidents and record findings clearly
- 9.7 To interview those being 'bullied' or 'bullying' separately
- 9.8 To interview any witnesses
- 9.9 To hold lessons/class discussions/assemblies about bullying
- 9.10 To include a reference to not tolerating bullying within class cultures/purpose (SEE BEHAVIOUR POLICY)



At this stage, the senior leadership team will be informed, as will any staff members who may see the child at all during the school day (e.g. lunchtime supervisors)

* All interviews, and witness statements during the course of the investigation will be recorded on the school Serious Incident Form *

Procedure for handling a complaint made by a parent/carer about bullying.

10.1 Actions to be taken against proven bullying (dependent on the seriousness and frequency of behaviours)

10.1 Inform parents of child being bullied, and the child carrying out the bullying, of the outcome of the investigation

10.2 Inform parents of the bullied child the next steps being taken in school to support both their child, and the child carrying out the bullying **(It is important to note here that the school will seek to be restorative as well as developmental; where bullying has taken place as a result of underlying issues in the perpetrator, developmental work will take place to support them, as well as the person who has been bullied)**

10.3 Obtain an apology from the perpetrator to the bullied pupil (this will be discussed with parents of the victim of bullying first to determine the best and most effective way of allowing this to happen)

10.4 Through the meeting between parents of the child bullying, the class teacher, key stage leader and learning mentor, work with the perpetrator and parents to support reflection and growth as a result of the bullying behaviour. In this meeting, the school team will also make clear the consequences of repeated behaviour clear

10.5 The school approach to supporting the person who has been bullied, and identifying the underlying root cause/motivation for the perpetrator of the bullying, will be rooted in research based Trauma Informed Practice. This will include: (TO BE ADDED)

If Bullying Persists:

- The bully, or group of bullies, will be withdrawn from the playground or classroom for a period of time and their parents will be informed of the action that has been taken and the reason for it
- Their behaviour will be monitored for a period of time so as to enable the school and home to work together to overcome the problem
- Ultimately, if the bullying persists despite high levels of support and monitoring being in offer, the school will look towards the school exclusion policy

10.5: The learning mentor, KS leader and class teacher will schedule regular 'check ins' with the child being bullied, and the child/ren doing the bullying. This monitoring will continue until the situation has been fully resolved.

11 Actions to be taken to support the person who has been bullied

A range of strategies can be used, (see Staff resources on Bullying). In any instances of bullying the following procedures should apply.

11.1 Give the person who has been bullied the opportunity to talk to a member of staff in private.

11.2 Ensure that the appropriate member of staff has been informed_ Usually Key Stage leader, and class teacher.

11.3 Record incident and actions taken (class teacher or headmaster)

11.4 Discuss with the child and parents, if appropriate, a plan for them to follow if any such incidents re-occur (class teacher or headmaster)

11.5 Check after specified item that the situation had not re-occurred (class teacher or headmaster)

11.76 Incident recorded On CPOMS

12 Governing Body Responsibilities

12.1 To ensure that the policy is being applied across the school.

12.2 To monitor: All staff, pupils and curriculum committee, safeguarding member of governing board.

12.3 The frequency and types of incidents. The Headmaster's termly report will contain details of this. This is also shared at Pupils and Curriculum Committee meetings.

12.4 The re-occurrence rate of bullying behaviour

12.5 The actions being taken in school to remedy and correct bullying behaviour and its implications

12.6 The above will be included in the Head of School's termly report to Governors and reports to the Pupils and Curriculum Committee

12.7 To follow laid down procedures for dealing with complaints or exclusions

Monitoring, evaluation and review

The school will review this policy annually and assess its implementation and effectiveness. The policy will be promoted and implemented throughout the school.

Useful Resources

<https://www.anti-bullyingalliance.org.uk/>

<https://youngminds.org.uk/find-help/feelings-and-symptoms/bullying/>

<https://www.kidscape.org.uk/>

<https://www.bullying.co.uk/>

<https://www.antibullyingpro.com/>

Last reviewed and updated February 2021