



St Anne's
Church of England Academy

The best for everyone
The best from everyone
We have faith in our future

ANTI-BULLYING POLICY

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Contents

1. Introduction	1
2. Purpose of the Policy	1
3. Our Aims.....	1
4. What is Bullying?.....	1
5. Bullying and the Law	2
6. Specific Forms of Bullying	2
6.1 Artificial Intelligence (AI)	2
6.2 Baiting and Bullying.....	3
6.3 Banter or Bullying?	3
6.4 Cyberbullying.....	4
6.5 False Friendships	4
6.6 Harmful Sexual Behaviour	5
7. What does bullying look like, feel like and sound like?	5
8. The Effects of Bullying.....	6
9. Involving Parents and Carers	6
10. Guidelines for Students.....	7
10.1 How to Avoid Being Bullied	7
10.2 How Bullying Behaviour is Dealt With	7
11. How the Anti Bullying Policy is promoted to Students.....	8
12. Links with Other Policies	8
Appendix 1: Links to Further Information, Advice and Guidance	9

1. Introduction

At St Anne's CE Academy we aim to provide a safe, caring and friendly environment for all our students in order to allow them to learn effectively, improve their life chances and help them maximise their potential.

We would expect students to feel safe in school, including an understanding of the issues relating to safety, such as bullying. We also want them to feel confident to seek support from school should they feel unsafe.

St Anne's CE Academy recognises its responsibilities in preventing and tackling bullying in accordance with the requirements of the Education Act 2002, the Education and Inspections Act 2006 and the Equalities Act 2010

2. Purpose of the Policy

- To help develop a school community where all individuals have a valued role to play.
- To minimise confrontation and encourage mutual respect.
- To provide a positive learning environment.
- To maximise achievement by all within the school community.

3. Our Aims

St Anne's CE Academy has a consistent approach to any bullying incidents that occur and seeks to involve Teaching Staff, Support Staff and the Local Governing Committee in the implementation and monitoring of this policy.

St Anne's CE Academy raises awareness of bullying and promotes positive relationships built on respect and ensures fair treatment for all. Everyone has a responsibility for safeguarding students and all members of staff and the Local Governing Committee have a duty of care to ensure our students are protected from harm. This policy is published on the school website for easy access by the whole community.

4. What is Bullying?

St Anne's CE Academy has adopted the following definition of bullying:

“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. It can happen face-to-face or online.”

Source: ABA - Anti-Bullying Alliance [Our definition of bullying \(anti-bullyingalliance.org.uk\)](http://anti-bullyingalliance.org.uk)

This is the agreed shared definition of bullying from the Anti-Bullying Alliance and its members and is based on research from across the world over the last 30 years.

Bullying behaviour often involves four key elements: being hurtful; repetition (being repeated more than once); having a power imbalance; being intentional.

Bullying can be:

- **Physical** – pushing, poking, kicking, hitting, biting, pinching etc. including inappropriate or unwanted physical contact,
- **Verbal** – name calling, sarcasm, spreading rumours, threats, teasing, taunting, belittling, including offensive or personal remarks
- **Emotional/Psychological** – isolating others, tormenting, hiding belongings, making threatening gestures, ridicule, humiliation, intimidating, excluding, manipulation and coercion
- **Sexual** – unwanted physical contact of a sexual nature, inappropriate touching, abusive comments, sexual slurs, homophobic abuse, exposure to inappropriate content etc.
- spreading nasty stories, gossiping, excluding people from social groups, negative body language.
- **Online / Cyber** – posting on social media or social networking sites or apps, sharing photos or content, sending nasty messages by instant messaging, email, or on a chat room or forum, social exclusion online

5. Bullying and the Law

Some forms of bullying may break the law and may be reported to the police:

- Violence or assault; including the threat of violence with or without a weapon
- Theft or extortion; including taking or damaging belongings
- Repeated harassment or intimidation, including malicious online communications e.g. name calling, threats and abusive phone calls, emails or text messages, sexual harassment and peer on peer abuse;
- Hate crimes – any incident which the victim, or anyone else, thinks is based on someone's prejudice towards them because of their race, religion, sexual orientation, disability or because they are transgender.
- Malicious communications – it is an offence to use an electronic communication network to send a message, or anything else, that is grossly offensive or is an indecent, obscene or menacing in character and/or for the purpose of causing annoyance, inconvenience or needless anxiety to another.

6. Specific Forms of Bullying

6.1 Artificial Intelligence (AI)

Artificial intelligence (AI) tools are now widespread and easy to access. Staff, pupils and parents/carers may be familiar with generative chatbots such as ChatGPT and Google Bard.

At St Anne's CE Academy we recognise that AI has many uses to help pupils learn, but may also have the potential to be used to bully others. For example, in the form of 'deepfakes', where AI is used to create images, audio or video hoaxes that look real.

St Anne's CE Academy will treat any use of AI to bully pupils in line with our Anti-bullying and Behaviour Policies.

6.2 Baiting and Bullying

"To 'bait' someone is to intentionally make a person angry by saying or doing things to annoy them."

Source: ABA - Anti-Bullying Alliance [Baiting \(anti-bullyingalliance.org.uk\)](http://anti-bullyingalliance.org.uk)

'Baiting' is a provocative act designed to bully or cause others to bully. Baiting is used to solicit an angry, aggressive or emotional response from another individual.

Baiting can be used in bullying both on and offline. It can be used to bully someone to get 'a rise' out of them and it can be used to antagonise those who might be bullying others to get them to bully. Sometimes baiting is used secretly to try and get a person to explode in a rage or react negatively/loudly so that they get in to trouble.

At St Anne's CE Academy we encourage students: not to take the bait! not to argue with a person or appeal to their sense of reason or logic while they are baiting you. They want you to rise to it!; and not to retaliate and fall into a trap.

6.3 Banter or Bullying?

"Banter is the playful and friendly exchange of teasing remarks."

Source: Dictionary definition

The journey from banter to bullying may involve people joking around, taking it too far and then causing real upset. At St Anne's CE Academy we consider the following when drawing the line between acceptable and unacceptable language:

- Just because 'banter' doesn't constitute all the elements of bullying, this doesn't mean it's acceptable.
- All offensive, threatening, violent and abusive language and behaviour is always unacceptable.
- This includes any negative language or behaviour in relation to, or referring to, a protected characteristic under the Equality Act 2010 i.e. age, disability, gender reassignment, marriage and civil partnership, pregnancy and maternity, race, religion or belief, sex (gender), sexual orientation.
- Just because someone uses certain language to refer to themselves it doesn't necessarily mean it's acceptable, nor does it make it ok for someone else to use it.
- Just because you think something is banter or a joke doesn't mean other people will.
- People won't always feel confident to speak up if they are offended by something. They might even go along with it so as not to draw attention to themselves. This doesn't make it right or acceptable.
- Third parties might be offended, even if they're not part of the 'banter' or conversation.

6.4 Cyberbullying

“Online bullying (often referred to as cyberbullying) is any form of bullying that is carried out through the use of electronic media devices, such as computers, laptops, smartphones, tablets, or gaming consoles.”

Source: ABA - Anti-Bullying Alliance Online bullying (anti-bullyingalliance.org.uk)

There are some things that make online bullying different to 'traditional' bullying:

- 24-7 nature: the nature of online activity means you can be in contact at any time. There is the potential for a wider audience and bullying incidents can stay online, for example: a photo that you can't remove.
- Evidence: a lot of online bullying incidents allow those experiencing it to keep evidence - for example, take a screen shot - to show to school staff or police if needed.
- Potential to hide your identity: it is possible to hide your identity online which can make online bullying incidents very scary.
- Degree of separation: people who cyberbully often don't see the reaction of those experiencing it so it can sometimes be harder for them to see the impact of their actions.

Students receive clear guidance and support about online communications in and out of school. Students are asked to be mindful of their personal digital footprint and how to stay safe and be kind online. Students are offered the following advice to deal with cyberbullying:

- Log Off: log off the site or app where cyberbullying is happening and take a break from being online.
- Block: block people or accounts from sending messages or emails and don't respond to them.
- Record: Screenshot and save the message/s or contact and show it to a parent/carer or another trusted adult
- Discuss: Tell someone you trust about what has happened and how you feel; or, if you prefer, contact a support service anonymously such as childline.

Students, as well as parents and carers, are encouraged to use the Report Harmful Content! Website to report the following online harms: threats; online abuse; impersonation; violent content; bullying and harassment; unwanted sexual advances; self-harm and suicide and pornographic content.

6.5 False Friendships

“False friendships’ describe relationships where someone pretends to be your friend, or is your ‘friend’ sometimes, but actually uses their power to bully.”

Source: ABA - Anti-Bullying Alliance [False friendships \(anti-bullyingalliance.org.uk\)](http://anti-bullyingalliance.org.uk)

Sometimes bullying isn't as straight forward as someone openly being mean or horrible to another person. It can be much more complicated than that. 'False friendship' is a form of social bullying and may involve peer on peer abuse.

Through the curriculum, including our personal development and pastoral curriculum, St Anne's CE Academy will reinforce what 'good' friend looks like and will reinforce the dynamics of healthy relationships. Staff will be on the look out for the dynamics of friendships and will be mindful that bullying can occur in 'friendship' groups

6.6 Harmful Sexual Behaviour

At St Anne's CE Academy we have a zero-tolerance approach to peer-on-peer abuse whether physical, psychological, emotional, sexual or online. It is never passed off as "banter", "children being children" or "just having a laugh", as this could lead to a culture of unacceptable behaviours and create an unsafe environment for children. Through our wider pastoral and personal development curriculum, children are taught in an age-appropriate way about: how to recognise, understand and build healthy relationships; self-respect and respect for others; tolerance, boundaries and consent as well as how to manage conflict and recognise unhealthy relationships. Any bullying matter arising that has a sexual element to it will be treated seriously in line with our appropriate policies and procedures.

7. What does bullying look like, feel like and sound like?

People are bullied for a variety of reasons and for no reason. Specific reasons or motives for bullying can include:

- Bullying related to race, religion or culture.
- Bullying related to SEN and/or disabilities.
- Bullying related to appearance or health conditions.
- Bullying related to sexual orientation or perceived sexual orientation [homophobic or biphobic]
- Bullying related to gender identity [transphobic]
- Bullying related to home, other personal circumstances or vulnerability
- Sexist or sexual bullying.

It is meant to hurt. The person or people doing the bullying know what they are doing and mean to do it. It happens more than once and there will be a pattern of behaviour. It also involves an imbalance of power; the person being bullied will usually find it very hard to defend themselves.

Who bullies?

- Anyone who has the capacity to bully, there is really no reliable diagnosis. However, those who perceive themselves as low status within a community or group may use bullying to artificially boost their status. Self-esteem is therefore a key factor in whether someone bullies or not.

Who is bullied?

- Anyone can be bullied, young person, parent/carer or staff member. People who suffer bullying are often perceived by others to be different. Sometimes the perceived

difference is individual to that person – shyness, physical appearance, clothing and accent.

- The Academy recognises that bullying can be student to student, teacher to student or student to teacher.

The different roles of bullying

- The Target: the person who is being bullied.
- The Ringleader: the person who starts and leads the bullying but not always the person 'doing' the bullying.
- Assistant(s): a person, or persons, actively involved in 'doing' the bullying.
- Reinforcer(s): a person, or persons, who supports the bullying; i.e. they might laugh or encourage other people to carry on what is going on.
- Defender(s): a person, or persons, who stands up for someone being bullied. They know that bullying is wrong and feels confident enough to do something about it. This might involve talking to an adult at home or in school.
- Outsider(s): a person, or persons, who ignores any bullying and doesn't want to get involved.
- Bystander(s): a person, or persons, who does not become actively involved in a situation where someone else requires help. They become an audience watching and though they do not actively participate, they encourage the perpetrators, who will feel driven on, or encouraged, by the audience.

8. The Effects of Bullying

The Academy recognises that students who are being bullied may show changes in behaviour, such as clinginess, feigned illness or even misbehavior and self-harm. If left unchecked, others may come to see bullying behaviour as acceptable. Those who bully or witness the bullying can also experience emotional harm and the impact on students and their parents or carers can be significant. Bullying can result in illness, depression, poor academic performance and long-term consequences which affect a person throughout the rest of their life.

9. Involving Parents and Carers

At St Anne's, we work with parents to help them recognise and deal with bullying. We encourage parents to contact school immediately if they suspect their child is being bullied. The Academy informs parents or carers of incidents and involves them in discussions.

We will listen to your child and appropriate support will be put in place for any child who reports that they have been bullied so that they feel safe in school. Academy staff will investigate all bullying allegations, using CCTV as necessary, and meet with students to allow conciliation to take place. We will make safeguarding referrals to external agencies as necessary and impose appropriate sanctions against perpetrators of bullying.

We also seek support from parents and carers in the event of their child being responsible for bullying behaviour and for sanctions imposed by the Academy as a consequence of this behaviour.

Parents and Carers can support our anti-bullying ethos by:

- Regularly speaking to their child/ren in order to promote a social conscience and awareness that reporting bullying is the right thing to do.
- Being aware of, and supporting, the Academy's Anti-Bullying Policy and procedures and use these to assist their child/ren in understanding bullying behaviour.
- Supporting the Academy's actions in dealing with proven cases of bullying
- Working with the Academy in order to support their child in developing positive responses to incidents of bullying consistent with the school's anti-bullying procedures
- Engaging with the Early Help process if the need is identified and wider support is required
- Being responsible for monitoring their children's e-communications and social media use. Should instances of cyber-bullying occur, parents and carers are responsible for ensuring that the appropriate reporting mechanisms are used. For example, the report feature on social media platforms such as Facebook, X, tiktok or snapchat; the red flag feature on YouTube or reporting to Greater Manchester Police.

10. Guidelines for Students

Students should report bullying to an adult, whether the bullying is happening to themselves or others. They should never stand by and watch; they should avoid situations on social media where bullying is taking place and report them when they occur. Students should avoid text messaging when it is being used in a hurtful way and should report any instances immediately.

10.1 How to Avoid Being Bullied

- Tell a responsible adult as soon as possible.
- Keep any evidence, e.g. text message or Facebook message.
- Avoid the people doing the bullying, don't have them as a friend on social media.
- Don't react, stay calm and remind yourself that this can be stopped.
- Make it clear you are disinterested in what the bully is saying.

10.2 How Bullying Behaviour is Dealt With

Academy staff are constantly vigilant in spotting and preventing incidents of bullying in the Academy. Any suspected bullying incident is dealt with effectively and sensitively by trained staff.

Staff are available to listen and provide immediate support to a student who reports they have been bullied. Support is provided both in the classroom and outside the classroom as required in order to make the student feel safe in school. This could include key members of staff including the Safeguarding and Welfare Officer, Pastoral Year Leaders and Form Tutors. Student Peer Mentors are also available to provide appropriate support.

Parents or carers are contacted immediately and are fully involved and advised of the actions taken to protect their child and to resolve the situation, e.g., restorative justice interventions or mediation. All allegations of bullying are investigated and dealt with in accordance with the Academy Behaviour Policy. The Academy will refer bullying allegations to the Police, Local Authority Designated Officer [LADO] or other external agencies where necessary.

Whilst the Academy cannot be held responsible for incidents which take place in the local community, support will be provided to students and their parents or carers and the Academy will cooperate fully with any Police involvement.

We record and monitor all incidents and allegations of bullying and evaluate our response to these allegations through discussions at Strategic Behaviour Group Meetings.

11. How the Anti Bullying Policy is promoted to Students

- An Anti-Bullying Session is held during Summer School for new Year 7 students
- The Academy supports National Anti-Bullying Week in November on an annual basis
- One Assembly per term has an Anti-Bullying focus
- The Academy supports Safer Internet Day in February on an annual basis
- Assemblies promote the Academy's ethos, values and positive relationships
- Peer Mentors attend an Anti-Bullying Workshop and are available to support students
- The Academy responds to concerns and ideas raised by Student Voice
- The Academy supports the Random Acts of Kindness project
- Anti-Bullying Posters including useful contacts and websites are displayed around the Academy
- The PSHE, Computer Science, pastoral and personal development curriculum cover aspects of anti-bullying content

12. Links with Other Policies

- Behaviour Policy
- Safeguarding Policy
- E-Safety Guidance
- Complaints Policy
- Equality Policy

Appendix 1: Links to Further Information, Advice and Guidance

The websites listed below offer direct links to other sources of information for parents and students:

Advisory Centre for Education: www.ace-ed.org.uk; Registered charity independent of central or local government giving free advice and support to parents of children in state schools.

Anti-Bullying Network: www.antibullying.net; Established by the Scottish Executive. Useful links and reviews for teachers, parents and students on bullying and related issues.

BBC Schools: www.bbc.co.uk/schools; Includes information about bullying.

Bully OnLine: www.bullyonline.org; Information on bullying for teachers, children and schools which details the legal procedures available. This site also lists support groups for teachers.

Bullying Online: www.bullying.co.uk; useful information and links on bullying and related issues for parents, children and teachers.

Childline: www.childline.org.uk; Primarily a helpline for children but has useful information and links on bullying.

Kidscape: www.kidscape.org.uk; advice for children, parents and teachers as well as training and sample policies.

Stonewall: www.stonewall.org.uk; useful information and links on LGBTQ issues.