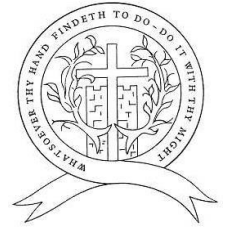


St Matthew's Church of England Primary School

# Anti-Bullying Policy

Policy written by Kirsten Cameron  
Governor link: Chair of Governors

Policy approved in July 2025  
Policy to be reviewed in Summer 2026



**St Edmundsbury and Ipswich**  
Diocesan Multi Academy Trust

**Whatever you do, do it with all your heart. Colossians 3:23**

**Our vision** is to be a school where pupils have a positive approach to learning and where provision is consistently good or better. Our curriculum is relevant and creative and reflects our diversity. We aim for all pupils to leave St Matthew's well equipped for the future, demonstrating Christian values and showing self-confidence.

## 1. Introduction

At St Matthew's Church of England Primary School, we take all forms of conflict, friendship problems, child on child abuse and bullying behaviour seriously.

Our aims are:

- To provide a safe and secure environment for all children in our care.
- To create a happy atmosphere in which both parents and staff work together for the welfare of the students.
- Everyone is mutually valued and respected regardless of gender, race, sexual orientation, beliefs and ability.
- To encourage children to adopt agreed standards of behaviour and values in order to develop a sense of self-discipline and to take responsibility for their own actions.

This Anti-Bullying Policy operates in conjunction with the following policies:

- Safeguarding and Child Protection Policy as bullying is classified as child on child abuse
- Behaviour Policy
- Online Safety Policy
- Equal Opportunities Policy.

The Anti-Bullying Policy will be made available to parents and other people who have an interest in our school via the school's website or the school office.

## 2. Objectives of this Policy

- To ensure that everyone in the school community has an understanding of what bullying is and how the school will deal with incidences of bullying
- Support the victim and support the bully to modify their behaviour
- To nurture a listening caring ethos at St Matthew's Church of England Primary School where any form of bullying is not tolerated and where victims know they will be taken seriously following a disclosure
- All staff are aware of the Anti-Bullying Policy and are confident with dealing with an incident

### 3. Definition of Bullying Behaviour

We acknowledge that both friendship problems and bullying behaviour can be upsetting and unpleasant but it is important to distinguish between the two, as the responses to friendship problems will be different to the strategies used to address bullying behaviour.

Friendship problems may be an occasional incident where both children disagree and find it difficult to resolve the disagreement without adult help. It is unlikely to be repeated behaviour and may even be accidental, where both children make an effort to resolve the problem. However, we recognise that repeated friendship problems can sometimes lead to bullying behaviour.

Bullying behaviour is defined as – **“repetitive, intentional hurting of one person or group by another person or group, where the relationship involves an imbalance of power. It can happen face to face or online”** (Anti-bullying Alliance).

The children of St Matthew’s use this definition of bullying:

**S** – several    **T** – times    **O** – on    **P**- purpose

Occasionally an incident may be deemed to be bullying even if the behaviour has not been repeated or persistent – if it fulfils all other descriptions of bullying. This possibility should be considered, particularly in cases of sexual, sexist, racist or homophobic bullying and when children with disabilities are involved. If the victim might be in danger, then intervention is urgently required.

Bullying can take many forms:

- **Physical bullying:** examples include: hitting, punching, finger jabbing, any inappropriate touching, pinching, jostling, breaking or taking property
- **Verbal bullying:** examples include: name calling, put downs, threats, teasing, ridiculing, belittling, excessive criticism or sarcasm.
- **Indirect bullying:** examples include: rumours or stories, exclusion from a group, shunning, invading privacy, graffiti designed to embarrass, withholding friendship or affection.
- **Cyber bullying:** examples include: sending nasty phone calls, text messages or e-mails/chat rooms. Linked to schools Online Safety Policy
- **Prejudice based bullying:** this takes place when a child is deemed to belong to a certain group, and includes homophobic bullying, racist bullying, sexual or gender bullying, and bullying of students with learning or other disabilities. (Linked to Equalities Policy).

#### **Child on Child Abuse - Children and young people who harm others:**

Child on Child abuse can take various forms, including: serious bullying (including cyber-bullying), relationship abuse, domestic violence, child sexual exploitation, youth and serious youth violence, harmful sexual behaviour, and/or gender based violence.

There is no clear boundary between incidents that should be regarded as child on child abuse and incidents that would be considered as bullying, sexual experimentation, etc.

Assessments must be made on a case by case basis. (Firmin, C. 2017. Abuse Between Young People). In these instances, the pathways described in the Safeguarding Policy will be followed with incidents being reported to the Designated Safeguarding Lead – Kirsten Cameron.

### 4. Factors that make Children Vulnerable

The school recognises that although anyone can be bullied for almost any reason or differences, some children may be more vulnerable to bullying than others. The Equality Act 2010 identifies the 9 protected characteristics which can be identified when dealing with bullying related incidents.

Children and young people who are at most increased risk of causing harm (the harmer/alleged perpetrator) or being harmed (the harmed/victim) through bullying are those who:

- are in foster care or residential homes (looked after children)
- are understood to be at risk from a range of safeguarding or child protection issues i.e. safeguarding / organised crime groups

- have specific special educational needs
- have a disability or impairment
- are from minority ethnic backgrounds
- are refugees or asylum seekers
- start a school or activity group mid term
- are, or are perceived to be, gay, lesbian, bisexual, transgender or questioning of their sexuality or gender
- speak a first language other than English
- are young carers
- have suffered bereavement
- have suffered domestic violence
- have experienced physical or emotional trauma
- have a parent that was a victim of bullying
- experienced poverty or deprivation

## **5. Signs and Symptoms**

A child may indicate by signs or behaviour that he or she is being bullied. Adults are aware that some children are not ready to talk about their concerns and therefore are aware of these possible signs and that they should investigate if a child:

- Is frightened of walking to or from school
- Begs to be driven to school
- Changes their usual routine
- Is unwilling to go to school (school phobic)
- Becomes withdrawn, anxious, or lacking in confidence
- Starts stammering
- Attempts or threatens self-harm
- Cries themselves to sleep at night or has nightmares/bedwetting
- Regularly feels ill in the morning
- Begins to do poorly in school work
- Comes home with clothes torn or books damaged
- Has possessions go "missing"
- Has unexplained cuts or bruises
- Becomes unreasonable when dealing with school issues
- Stops eating

## **6. Implementation of Policy:**

### **Prevention**

The school will take appropriate steps to raise awareness of bullying in all year groups. This will be done via:

- PSHE lessons and circle time to discuss the impact of bullying
- Anti-bullying day activities / events annually
- School council discussions / prevention activities
- Introduction of 'worry boxes' to classrooms as a tool through which pupils can express concerns to teachers
- Staff implementation of behaviour policy to encourage positive behaviour
- Regular reminders for pupils of how to refer or report any incidents of bullying

### **Handling an Incident:**

When bullying has been reported, the following actions will be taken:

- Staff will investigate and record the bullying on the schools incident reporting form and also record the incident centrally on CPOMs
- Designated school staff will monitor incident reporting forms and information recorded on CPOMs, analysing and evaluating the results

- Designated school staff will produce termly reports summarising the information, which the head teacher will report to the Governors
- Staff will inform parents or carers and where necessary involve them in any plan of action
- Staff will assess whether any other services (such as Police or the Local Authority) need to be involved, particularly when actions take place outside of school

**Safeguarding procedures must be followed when Child Protection concerns arise.**

## **Disciplinary Action:**

The following disciplinary steps may be taken following an incident of bullying, depending on the severity of the incident:

- Official warning for the alleged perpetrator
- Informing parents of incidents
- Missing of play times
- Exclusion from certain areas of school premises e.g. playground, areas of lunch hall
- Suspensions
- Permanent exclusion

## **Support:**

### ***Victim***

Support for the victim is essential both immediately following the incident and during an agreed period of review. Peer support, staff support, parental support and outside agency support may all be essential to ensure that the victim does not suffer any long term effects. After a period of time staff will meet with the victim to reassess the situation and the relationship between those involved.

Children who have been bullied will be supported by:

- Offering an immediate opportunity to discuss the experience with a member of staff they feel happy to talk to
- Reassuring the pupil
- Offering continuous support
- Restoring self-esteem and confidence
- Being paired with/looked after other pupils at playtimes

### ***Perpetrator(s)***

It is recognised that support must be given to the perpetrator. Disciplinary procedures against the perpetrator(s) are intended to change or modify behaviour rather than label anyone as a bully. Such procedures may include:

- Positive behaviour strategies
- Withdrawal of activities
- The establishment of mentoring or a buddy system
- Discussion about the effects of bullying
- Informing parents or guardians to help change the attitude of the pupil
- Involvement of other agencies and external

### ***Witnesses / Observers***

Support for witnesses or observers of bullying is essential both immediately following the incident and during an agreed period of review. Peer support, staff support and parental support may all be essential to ensure that these children do not suffer any long term effects.

Children who have witnessed or observed bullying will be supported by:

- Offering an immediate opportunity to discuss the experience with a member of staff they feel happy to talk to
- Reassuring the pupil
- Offering continuous support
- Restoring self-esteem and confidence

## **7. Taking Account of Individual Children's Needs**

All sanctions must be reasonable and proportionate to the circumstances of the case.

The school will take account of individual children's needs and circumstances, in particular SEND, disability and circumstances of other vulnerable children when applying the Anti Bullying Policy.

Where appropriate the school will ensure that there are clear and visual explanations to ensure that all children understand the inappropriateness of their actions.

The school will ensure that all those in contact with the child know what has been agreed and that every vulnerable child in the school has someone who knows them well, has good links with the home and can act as a reference point for staff when they are unsure about how to apply the Anti-Bullying Policy

## **8. Recording, Monitoring and Evaluating Incidents**

'Bullying and Prejudice Related Incident' forms will be used to record significant incidents and any subsequent actions. These will be shared with the Governors and MAT as appropriate

Parents/carers are involved as soon as concerns arise for both the victim and the perpetrator.

Parents/carers are involved as partners and encouraged to pursue a consistent approach at home to ensure their children are not exposed to behaviours and language which could be used for any form of bullying

The school will monitor and assess the impact of our Anti-Bullying Policy on all stakeholders.

## **Supporting Organisations and Guidance**

Anti-Bullying Alliance: [www.anti-bullyingalliance.org.uk](http://www.anti-bullyingalliance.org.uk)

Childline: [www.childline.org.uk](http://www.childline.org.uk)

Family Lives: [www.familylives.org.uk](http://www.familylives.org.uk)

Kidscape: [www.kidscape.org.uk](http://www.kidscape.org.uk)

MindEd: [www.minded.org.uk](http://www.minded.org.uk)

NSPCC: [www.nspcc.org.uk](http://www.nspcc.org.uk)

Victim Support: [www.victimsupport.org.uk](http://www.victimsupport.org.uk)

Young Minds: [www.youngminds.org.uk](http://www.youngminds.org.uk)

Young Carers: <https://suffolkfamilycarers.org/young-carers>

DfE: “Preventing and Tackling Bullying. Advice for Headteachers, staff and governing bodies”, and “Supporting children and young people who are bullied: advice for schools” March 2014: <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/preventing-and-tackling-bullying>

DfE: “No health without mental health”: <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/no-health-without-mental-health-a-cross-government-outcomes-strategy>

PSHE Association: [www.pshe-association.org.uk](http://www.pshe-association.org.uk)

## **Cyberbullying**

Childnet International: [www.childnet.com](http://www.childnet.com)

Digizen: [www.digizen.org](http://www.digizen.org)

Internet Watch Foundation: [www.iwf.org.uk](http://www.iwf.org.uk)

Think U Know: [www.thinkuknow.co.uk](http://www.thinkuknow.co.uk)

UK Safer Internet Centre: [www.saferinternet.org.uk](http://www.saferinternet.org.uk)

## **LGBTQ+**

EACH: [www.eachaction.org.uk](http://www.eachaction.org.uk)

Schools Out: [www.schools-out.org.uk](http://www.schools-out.org.uk)

Stonewall: [www.stonewall.org.uk](http://www.stonewall.org.uk)

Barnardos: [www.barnardos.org.uk](http://www.barnardos.org.uk)

## **SEND**

Changing Faces: [www.changingfaces.org.uk](http://www.changingfaces.org.uk)

Mencap: [www.mencap.org.uk](http://www.mencap.org.uk)

DfE: SEND code of practice: <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/send-code-of-practice-0-to-25>

## **Racism and Hate**

Anne Frank Trust: [www.annefrank.org.uk](http://www.annefrank.org.uk)

Kick it Out: [www.kickitout.org](http://www.kickitout.org)

Report it: [www.report-it.org.uk](http://www.report-it.org.uk)

Stop Hate: [www.stophateuk.org](http://www.stophateuk.org)

Show Racism the Red Card: [www.srtrc.org](http://www.srtrc.org)

## Appendix A

St Matthew's Church of England Primary School

# Bullying and Prejudice Related Incident

Report form



Name of staff member filling in the form	
Date	

### Details of the incident

#### Bullying

- Physical eg. hitting, kicking, pushing
- Verbal eg. name calling, ridicule
- Cyber eg. social media
- Emotional
- Written
- Damage to personal property
- Threat with a weapon
- Theft
- Persistent bullying

#### Prejudice related incident

- Racist bullying
- Homophobic bullying
- Biphobic bullying
- Transphobic bullying
- Culture or class
- Sexist bullying
- Appearance or health conditions
- Religion or belief related
- Other

### Details of those involved

Name of child targeted	
Name of child responsible for bullying	

### Further information

Date / Place / Time of incident	
Witnesses	
What happened	
Action taken	
Date for review	