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**St Bega’s School Anti-Bullying Policy 2023**

This policy is based on DfE guidance “Preventing and Tackling Bullying” July 2017 and supporting documents. It also considers the DfE statutory guidance “Keeping Children Safe in Education” 2018. The setting has also read Childnet’s “Cyberbullying: Understand, Prevent and Respond: Guidance for Schools”.

1. **Policy objectives:**

* This policy outlines what St Bega’s school will do to prevent and tackle all forms of bullying.
* St Bega’s is committed to developing an anti-bullying culture where the bullying of adults or children is not tolerated in any form.

1. **Links with other school policies**

This policy links with several school policies, practices and action plans, including:

* Behaviour and discipline policy
* Complaints policy
* Child protection policy
* Confidentiality policy
* Online safety and acceptable use policy
* Curriculum policy

**3) Links to Legislation**

There are several pieces of legislation which set out the measures and actions for schools in response to bullying, as well as criminal and civil law. These may include, but are not limited to:

* The Education and Inspection Act 2006, 2011
* The Equality Act 2010
* The Children Act 1989
* Protection from Harassment Act 1997
* The Malicious Communications Act 1988
* Public Order Act 1986

1. **Responsibilities**

It is the responsibility of:

* The Head teacher to communicate this policy to the school community, to ensure that disciplinary measures are applied fairly, consistently and reasonably, and to take overall responsibility for its application.
* Governors to take a lead in monitoring and reviewing this policy.
* All staff, including governors, the head teacher, staff and non-teaching staff, to support, uphold and implement this policy accordingly.
* Parents/carers to support their children and work in partnership with the school.
* Pupils to abide by the policy.

1. **Definition of bullying**

* Bullying can be defined as “behaviour by an individual or group, repeated over time that intentionally hurts another individual either physically or emotionally”. (DfE “Preventing and Tackling Bullying”, July 2017).
* Bullying can include: name calling, taunting, mocking, making offensive comments, hitting, kicking, taking belongings, producing offensive graffiti, gossiping, excluding people from groups and spreading hurtful and untruthful rumours.
* This includes the same unacceptable behaviours expressed online, sometimes called online or cyberbullying. This can include: sending offensive, upsetting and inappropriate messages by phone, text, instant messenger, through gaming, websites, social media sites and apps, and sending offensive or degrading photos or videos.
* Bullying is recognised by the school as being a form of peer on peer abuse. It can be emotionally abusive and can cause severe and adverse effects on children’s emotional development.

1. **Forms and types of bullying covered by this policy**

Bullying can happen to anyone. This policy covers all types and forms of bullying, including:

* Bullying related to physical appearance
* Bullying of young carers, children in care or otherwise related to home circumstances
* Bullying related to physical/mental health conditions
* Physical bullying
* Emotional bullying
* Sexual bullying
* Bullying via technology, known as online or cyberbullying
* Prejudicial bullying (against people/pupils with protected characteristics):
  + Bullying related to race, religion, faith and belief and for those without faith
  + Bullying related to ethnicity, nationality or culture
  + Bullying related to Special Educational Needs or Disability (SEND)
  + Bullying related to sexual orientation (homophobic/bi-phobic bullying)
  + Gender based bullying, including transphobic bullying

1. **School ethos**

* St Bega’s school community recognises that all forms of bullying, especially if left unaddressed, can have a devastating effect on individuals; it can create a barrier to learning and have serious consequences for mental wellbeing.
* By effectively preventing and tackling bullying, our school can help to create a safe and disciplined environment, where pupils are able to learn and fulfil their potential.
* St Bega’s seeks to work in alignment with the Church of England Vision for Education (2016), which includes a commitment to Dignity and Respect.

Our community:

* Monitors and reviews our anti-bullying policy and practice on a regular basis.
* Supports staff to promote positive relationships to help prevent bullying.
* Recognises that some members of our community may be more vulnerable to bullying and its impact than others; this may include children with SEND. Being aware of this will help to develop effective strategies to prevent bullying from happening and provide appropriate support, if required.
* Will intervene by identifying and tackling bullying behaviour appropriately and promptly.
* Ensures our pupils are aware that bullying concerns will be dealt with sensitively and effectively; that everyone should feel safe to learn and abide by the anti-bullying policy.
* Requires all members of the community to work with the school to uphold the anti-bullying policy.
* Recognises the potential impact of bullying on the wider family of those affected, so will work in partnership with parents/carers regarding all reported bullying concerns and will seek to keep them informed at all stages.
* Will deal promptly with complaints regarding the school response to bullying in line with our complaints policy.
* Seeks to learn from good anti-bullying practice elsewhere.
* Utilises support from Local Authority and other relevant organisations when appropriate.

1. **Responding to bullying**

The following steps may be taken when dealing with all incidents of bullying reported to the school:

* If bullying is suspected or reported, the incident will be dealt with immediately by the member of staff who has been approached or witnessed a concern.
* The school will provide appropriate support for the person being bullied, making sure they are not at risk of immediate harm, and will involve them in any decision making, as appropriate.
* The Head teacher (as designated safeguarding lead) or another member of staff will interview all parties involved.
* The Head teacher will be informed of all bullying issues where there are safeguarding concerns.
* The school will speak with and inform other staff members, where appropriate.
* The school will ensure parents/carers are kept informed about the concern and action taken, as appropriate and in line with child protection and confidentiality policies.
* Sanctions, as identified within the school behaviour policy, and support, will be implemented in consultation with all parties concerned.
* If necessary, other agencies may be consulted or involved, such as the police if a criminal offence has been committed, or other local services including early help or children’s social care, if a child is felt to be at risk of significant harm.
* Where the bullying of or by pupils takes place off school site or outside of normal school hours (including cyberbullying), the school will ensure that the concern is fully investigated. If required, the Head teacher will collaborate with other schools. Appropriate action will be taken, including providing support and implementing sanctions in school in accordance with this policy and the school’s behaviour policy.
* A clear and precise account of bullying incidents will be recorded by school in accordance with existing procedures. This will include recording appropriate details regarding decisions and action taken.

**Cyberbullying**

When responding to cyberbullying concerns, the school will:

* Act as soon as an incident has been reported or identified.
* Provide appropriate support for the person who has been cyberbullied and work with the person who has carried out the bullying to ensure that it does not happen again.
* Encourage the person being bullied to keep any evidence (screenshots) of the bullying activity to assist any investigation.
* Take all available steps where possible to identify the person responsible. This may include:
  + Looking at use of the school systems
  + Identifying and interviewing possible witnesses
  + Contacting the service provider and the police, if necessary
* Work with the individuals and online service providers to prevent the incident from spreading and assist in removing offensive or upsetting material from circulation. This may include:
  + Support reports to a service provider to remove content if those involved are unable to be identified or if those involved refuse to or are unable to delete content.
  + Confiscating and searching pupils’ electronic devices, such as mobile phones, in accordance with the law and the school searching and confiscation policy. (Do we allow electronic devices and phones within school?)
  + Requesting the deletion of locally held content and content posted online if they contravene school behavioural policies.
* Ensure that sanctions are applied to the person responsible for cyberbullying; the school will take steps to change the attitude and behaviour of the bully, as well as ensuring access to any additional help that they may need.
* Inform the police if a criminal offence has been committed.
* Provide information to staff and pupils regarding steps they can take to protect themselves online. This may include:
  + Advising those targeted not to retaliate or reply
  + Providing advice on blocking or removing people from contact lists
  + Helping those involved to think carefully about what private information they may have in the public domain.

**Supporting pupils**

Pupils who have been bullied will be supported by:

* Reassuring the pupil and providing continuous pastoral support
* Offering an immediate opportunity to discuss the experience with a teacher or member of staff of their choice
* Discussing how to respond to concerns and build resilience as appropriate
* Working towards restoring self-esteem and confidence
* Providing ongoing support; this may include working with and speaking to staff, offering formal counselling, engaging with parents and carers.
* Where necessary, working with the wider community and local/national organisations to provide further or specialist advice and guidance.

Pupils who have perpetrated bullying will be helped by:

* Discussing what happened, establishing the concern and the need to change
* Informing parents/carers to help change the attitude and behaviour of the child
* Providing appropriate education and support regarding their behaviour or actions
* If online, requesting that content be removed and reporting accounts/content to service provider.
* Sanctioning, in line with the school behaviour policy; this may include official warnings, detentions, removal of privileges (including online access) and fixed-term or permanent exclusions.
* Where necessary, working with the wider community and local/national organisations to provide further or specialist advice and guidance.

**Supporting adults**

St Bega’s school takes measures to prevent and tackle bullying among pupils. However, it is equally important to recognise that bullying of adults, including staff and parents, whether by pupils, parents or other members of staff, is unacceptable.

Adults who have been bullied or affected will be supported by:

* Offering an immediate opportunity to discuss the concern with the Head teacher as the designated safeguarding lead.
* Advising them to keep a record of the bullying as evidence, and discuss how to respond to concerns and build resilience, as appropriate.
* Where the bullying takes place off school site or outside of normal school hours (including online), the school will investigate the concern and ensure that appropriate action is taken in accordance with the school’s behaviour and discipline policy.
* Reporting offensive or upsetting content and/or accounts to the service provider, where the bullying has occurred online
* Reassuring and providing appropriate support
* Working with the wider community and local/national organisations to provide further or specialist advice and guidance.
* Establishing whether a legitimate grievance or concern has been raised and signposting to the school’s official complaints procedures

Adults who have perpetrated the bullying will be helped by:

* Discussing what happened with the head teacher, to establish the concern
* If online, requesting that content be removed
* Instigating disciplinary, civil or legal action as appropriate or required

1. **Preventing bullying**

Environment

The whole school community will:

* Create and support an inclusive environment which promotes a culture of mutual respect, consideration and care for others, which will be upheld by all.
* Recognise that bullying can be perpetrated or experienced by any member of the community, including adults and children.
* Recognises the potential for children with SEN and disabilities to be disproportionately impacted by bullying and will implement pastoral support as required.
* Openly discuss differences between people that could motivate bullying, such as: children with different family situations (such as looked after children, or children with caring responsibilities), and those with protected characteristics.
* Challenge practice and language (including “banter”) which does not uphold the school values of community, compassion and friendship.
* Be encouraged to use technology positively and responsibly.
* Work with staff, the wider community and outside agencies to prevent and tackle concerns including all forms of prejudice-driven bullying.
* Actively create “safe spaces” for vulnerable children.
* Work together in alignment with the Church of England Vision for Education (2016), to ensure that at St Bega’s, we educate for Dignity and Respect.

**Education and Training *(we need to confirm that we do/will do these things*)**

The school community will:

* Train all staff, including support staff, to identify all forms of bullying and take appropriate action, following the school’s policy and procedures, including reporting and recording of incidents.
* Consider a range of opportunities and approaches for addressing bullying throughout the curriculum and other activities, such as through displays and assemblies.
* Collaborate with other local educational settings as appropriate, and during key times of the year, for example during transition.
* Ensure anti-bullying has a high profile throughout the year, reinforced through key opportunities such as anti-bullying week.
* Provide systematic opportunities to develop pupil’s social and emotional skills, including building their resilience and self-esteem (for example, nurture groups).

1. **Involvement of pupils**

We will:

* Ensure that pupils understand the school’s approach and are clear about the part they play in preventing bullying
* Regularly canvas children’s views on the extent and nature of bullying
* Ensure that all pupils know how to express worries and anxieties about bullying
* Involve pupils in anti-bullying campaigns and embedded messages in the wider curriculum
* Offer support to pupils who have been bullied and to those who are bullying to address the problems they have

1. **Involvement and liaison with parents and carers**

We will:

* Take steps to ensure parents and carers are aware that school does not tolerate any forms of bullying
* Make sure that key information about bullying (including policies and named points of contact) is available to parents/carers in a variety of formats, including the school website
* Ensure all parents/carers know who to contact if they are worried about bullying and where to access independent advice
* Work with all parents/carers and the local community to address issues beyond the school gate that give rise to bullying
* Ensure that all parents/carers know about the complaints procedure and how to use it to raise concerns in an appropriate manner

1. **Monitoring and review: putting policy into practice**

* St Bega’s will ensure that we regularly monitor and evaluate mechanisms to ensure that the policy is being consistently applied.
* Any issues identified will be incorporated in the school’s action planning.
* The Head teacher will be informed of bullying concerns, and will report on a regular basis to the governing body on incidents of bullying, including outcomes.

Policy adopted by the Governing Body of St Bega’s School on July 2023

Signed ----------------------------------------------------- Madonna Adams, Chair of Governors.