

Roman Catholic Diocese of East Anglia



Appendix 3

ANTI-BULLYING POLICY FOR CHILDREN AND YOUNG PEOPLE INVOLVED IN CHURCH ACTIVITIES

STATEMENT OF INTENT

We are committed to providing a caring, friendly and safe environment for all our children and young people so they can develop in a relaxed and secure atmosphere. Bullying of any kind is unacceptable in our _____ parish/group (name activity). If bullying does occur, all children and young people should be able to tell and be confident that incidents will be dealt with promptly and effectively. This means that anyone who knows that bullying is happening is expected to tell the group leaders.

WHAT IS BULLYING?

Bullying is the use of aggression with the intention of hurting another person. Bullying results in pain and distress to the victim.

Bullying can be:

- Emotional: (being unfriendly).
- Physical: (pushing, kicking, hitting, punching or any use of violence including via emails or text messaging).
- Racist: (racial taunts, graffiti, gestures).
- Sexual: (unwanted physical contact or sexually abusive comments).
- Homophobic (because of, or focusing on the issue of sexual orientation).
- Verbal (name-calling, sarcasm, spreading rumours, teasing).
- Related to a child's impairment or disability may include name calling or ridiculing.

WHY IS IT IMPORTANT TO RESPOND TO BULLYING?

Bullying hurts. No one deserves to be a victim of bullying. Everybody has the right to be treated with respect. Children and young people need to learn different ways of behaving. We have a responsibility to respond promptly and effectively to issues of bullying.

OBJECTIVES OF THIS POLICY

- Bullying will not be tolerated.
- All adults involved in the activity/event as well as children and young people should have an understanding of what bullying is.
- All adults involved in the activity/event must know what the policy is on bullying, and follow it when bullying is reported.
- All children/young people and parents should know what the policy is on bullying, and what they should do if bullying arises.
- Children, young people and parents should be assured that they will be supported when bullying is reported.

SIGNS AND SYMPTOMS

A child may indicate by signs or behaviour that he or she is being bullied. Adults should be aware of these possible signs and that they should consider the possibility that the child may be bullied. Further information can be obtained from Kidscape. (Contact details overleaf).

PREVENTION

Strategies can be adopted to prevent bullying. As and when appropriate, these may include:

- Writing a set of group rules.
- Signing a behaviour agreement.
- Writing stories or poems or drawing pictures about bullying.
- Reading stories about bullying or having them read to the group.
- Making up role-plays.
- Having discussions about bullying and why it matters.

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PROCEDURES

1. Report bullying to staff.
2. In cases of serious or persistent bullying, the incidents will be recorded by staff.
3. In serious or persistent cases parents will be informed and asked to come in to a meeting to discuss the problem.
4. If it is thought that an offence has been committed, contact the police.
5. The bullying behaviour or threats of bullying must be investigated and all bullying stopped quickly.
6. An attempt will be made to help the bullies change their behaviour.

OUTCOMES

1. In serious cases, suspension or even exclusion will be considered.
2. If possible, the children/young people will be reconciled.
3. After the incident/incidents have been investigated and dealt with, each case will be monitored to ensure repeated bullying does not take place.
4. After the incident/incidents have been investigated parents/carers should be informed of the action taken.

HELP ORGANISATIONS

Advisory Centre for Education (ACE)	0808 800 5793
Children's Legal Centre	0800 783 2187 (Young People's freephone) 0845 120 2948 (Child law advice line)
KIDSCAPE (Parent Helpline, Mon-Fri 10-4)	08451 205 204
Parentline Plus	08088 002222
Youth Access	020 8772 9900

For a copy of Kidscape's free booklets "Stop Bullying", "Preventing Bullying" and "You can beat Bullying", send a large (A4) self-addressed envelope with two 1st class stamps to:

Kidscape
2 Grosvenor Gardens
London
SW1W 0DH