



## The Priory Catholic Voluntary Academy

### Anti-Bullying (including Cyberbullying) and Anti-Racism Policy

#### Mission Statement

**The Priory; a place to learn: have fun, grow and develop, in the light and love of Christ.  
Jesus said: "I am the vine; you are the branches" (John 15:5)**

#### Guiding Rationale

Our religious beliefs coined within Catholic social teaching are central to the provision throughout the whole school; and the foundation on which the ethos of the school is built. Every person is recognised as a unique creation of God; it is the intention of every member of staff, for each child to be assisted in every way possible, to achieve his or her potential in all the fields which make up the whole human person: the academic, social, moral, physical and spiritual.

As Jesus taught through his actions and words, everyone has the right to be treated equally –with dignity and respect. All who work and learn here do so in the knowledge that God created us as unique individuals where our differences; whether of: disability, gender, gender reassignment, pregnancy, race, religion or belief, sex and sexual orientation and age, are celebrated as part of the wonderfully created world in which we live.

Our attitudes are Gospel led and every opportunity is taken to refer to behaviour norms which are seen as desirable and which epitomize those which are fostered by the Gospel teachings. This is especially the case in the ways in which we respect and relate to others through:

- valuing, respecting and promoting the rights, responsibilities and dignity of individuals within all our professional activities and relationships
- all members of staff feeling valued, well trained and able to perform their professional duties free from undue and damaging stress
- ensuring the equality of educational opportunity based on merit; irrespective of background, beliefs and socio-economic contexts.

As a worshipping community, we appreciate the importance of prayer in our daily lives and try to present as many opportunities as possible to participate in this intrinsic part of our Catholic Faith. It is from this action and acknowledgement of our faith that we are impelled to share our resources – the school and parish community undertake a great deal of charity work; supporting the global family of God on a local, national and world-wide basis.

## **Rationale**

All members of The Priory Catholic Voluntary Academy have an entitlement to be in an educational environment, which is safe, positive, secure and supportive; bullying and racism interferes with this. Bullying is the persistent, wilful, conscious desire to hurt, threaten or frighten someone. It can be physical, verbal or emotional, involving physical injury, threat and intimidation, teasing and name calling. It can be carried out face to face, or via the use of ICT (cyberbullying). Racism is a belief system which espouses that another human being has less worth, or indeed no worth at all; based on their appearance, religion or culture. All these features undermine relationships and are not conducive to the learning environment. At The Priory Catholic Academy, there is no place for bullying or racism.

## **Purposes**

- To provide a safe and secure environment for all pupils
- To promote an ethos free from bullying and racism
- To ensure that any reported incidents are dealt with sensitively, promptly and effectively; and to the appropriate authorities.

## **Preventative measures:**

The following strategies will be used to prevent bullying and racist incidents:

- Implementation of the Behaviour Policy – to provide a framework for a consistent approach to deal with inappropriate behaviour
- Outstanding Religious Education lessons and learning throughout school which successfully encourages pupils to respond to their learning by recording how the Gospel messages will influence their daily lives; their interactions with others – as well as challenging them to forgive and be forgiven
- Each year the whole school revisits the UN Rights of a child in order that children understand and know their rights (and are always encouraged to speak out for their rights when they feel that these are being impinged upon
- Paired group work around restorative justice to encourage shared understanding and responsibility
- Nurture time to explore feelings and overcome disagreements and squabbles
- Circle time – to develop co-operation and build self-esteem
- Small group and individual teacher/teaching assistant/ pupil discussions – to provide a forum for listening
- PSHE Lessons linked to the social and emotional aspects of learning) – to promote the personal, social and health of all pupils
- DARE programme – informing learners in Year 6 how to avoid and tackle bullying and racism in a skilful safe way
- Collective acts of worship and assemblies that give key messages and learning about Bullying and Racism
- Agencies such as CAFOD, NSPCC and local public speakers come to school each year to reinforce key positive messages about the importance of citizenship
- High profile learning during the Anti-bullying week.

## **Guidelines**

**The Catholic ethos and welcoming learning environment which exists at The Priory Catholic Academy, usually prevents bullying and racism; however, should incidents occur, these guidelines apply:**

1. All pupils reporting an incident of bullying or racism will be treated with respect and confidentiality.
2. All bullying and racist incidents will be recorded by the Headteacher and reported to the Governing Body.
3. Interpersonal skills will be addressed through the PSHE curriculum.
4. Reassurance will be given to the victim of the bullying; or racist remarks, and advice and support will be given.
5. All pupils will be treated with care and respect and be encouraged to show respect for others.
6. Victims will be given appropriate sympathy, support and reassurance.
7. Appropriate sanctions to deal with bullies and people who use racist language, in line with the School Behaviour Policy, will be implemented.
8. Pupils perpetrating bullying and racism will be given appropriate support to change their behaviour.
9. Parents will be informed as a matter of course.
10. The Central Support Services from the Local Authority will be consulted for advice and guidance when necessary.
11. Training opportunities will be available to all staff to develop anti bullying and anti racism strategies.
12. Resources are available to staff to enable them to have a greater understanding of the issues around bullying and racism.

## **Cyberbullying**

The school recognises that today's pupils have grown up in a world that is very different from that of most adults. Many young people experience the internet, particularly via mobile phones, as a positive, productive and creative part of their activities and development of their identities; always on and always there. Information communication technologies support social activity that allows young people to feel connected to their peers, and are an important part of pupils' educations.

Unfortunately, these technologies are sometimes used negatively. When young people are the target of bullying via the internet or social media, they can feel alone and very misunderstood. They may not be able to identify that what is happening to them is a form of bullying, or be confident that the adults around them will understand it that way either. Previously safe and enjoyable environments and activities can become threatening and a source of anxiety.

As mobile phone and internet use become increasingly common, so has the misuse of this technology to bully. Current research in this area indicates that cyberbullying is a feature of many young people's lives.

### **What is Cyberbullying?**

Cyberbullying is the use of Information Communications Technology (ICT), particularly mobile phones and the internet, deliberately to upset someone else. *(Governments must protect children from all other forms of bad treatment. RRSA Article 36)*

### **What's different about cyberbullying?**

Bullying is not new, but some features of cyberbullying are different from other forms of bullying:

- **24/7 and the invasion of home/personal space.** Cyberbullying can take place at any time and can intrude into spaces that have previously been regarded as safe or personal.
- **The audience can be very large and reached rapidly.** The difficulty in controlling electronically circulated messages means the scale and scope of cyberbullying can be greater than for other forms of bullying. Electronically forwarded content is hard to control, and the worry of content resurfacing can make it difficult for victims to move on.
- **People who cyberbully may attempt to remain anonymous.** This can be extremely distressing for those being bullied. The person cyberbullying may never be in the same physical space as their target.
- **The profile of the bully and target.** Cyberbullying can take place both between peers and across generations; teachers have also been targets. Age or size are not important. Bystanders can also become accessories to the bullying; for example, by passing on a humiliating image.
- **Some instances of cyberbullying are known to be unintentional.** It can be the result of not thinking (something sent as a joke may be deeply upsetting or offensive to the recipient) or a lack of awareness of the consequences – for example saying something negative online about another pupil, or friend that they don't expect to be forwarded or viewed outside their immediate group.
- **Many cyberbullying incidents can themselves act as evidence.** This is one of the reasons why it's important to know how to respond!

### **Cyberbullying and the law.**

**Education law:** Bullying is never acceptable. The school community has a duty to protect all its members and provide a safe, healthy environment. A range of Education Acts and government initiatives highlight these obligations.

The Education and Inspections Act 2006 (EIA 2006) outlines some legal powers which relate more directly to cyberbullying. Head teachers have the power 'to such an extent as is reasonable' to regulate the conduct of pupils when they are off site. The EIA also provides a defence for school staff in confiscating items such as mobile phones from pupils.

**Civil and criminal law:** Although bullying is not a specific criminal offence in UK law,

there are laws that can apply in terms of harassing or threatening behaviour, for example, or indeed menacing and threatening communications. In fact, some cyberbullying activities could be criminal offences under a range of different laws, including the Protection from Harassment Act 1997, which has both criminal and civil provision, the Malicious Communications Act 1988, section 127 of the Communications Act 2003, and the Public Order Act 1986.

## **Preventing Cyberbullying**

### **1. Understanding and talking about cyberbullying**

The whole school community needs a shared, agreed definition of cyberbullying. Everyone needs to be aware of the impact of cyberbullying and the ways in which it differs from other forms of bullying. Young people and their parents should be made aware of pupils' responsibilities in their use of ICT, and what the sanctions are for misuse. Students and parents should know that the school can provide them with support if cyberbullying takes place out of school.

### **2. Updating existing policies and practices**

We will review and update the school's anti-bullying policy plus other relevant policies – for example, policies on behaviour, pastoral care and e-safety. Records will be kept of any incidents of cyberbullying. ICT staff monitor internet use at school. Knowing that the school is taking such steps may act as a disincentive for bullies to misuse school equipment and systems.

### **3. Making reporting cyberbullying easier**

No one should feel that they have to deal with cyberbullying alone, but reporting any incident of bullying can be really hard for the person being bullied and for bystanders. If bullying, or cyberbullying does occur, all pupils should feel empowered to report it and know that incidents will be dealt with promptly and effectively.

### **4. Promoting the positive use of technology**

Technology is successfully being used to support engaging, positive and effective learning, and to realise and increase the potential of personalised learning by making learning more flexible, creative and accessible. Staff explore safe ways of using technology with learners to support self-esteem, assertiveness, participation and to develop friendships.

## **Responding to Cyberbullying**

Cyberbullying is a form of bullying, and therefore we will deal with the majority of cases through their existing anti-bullying policies and procedures.

## **Monitoring and Evaluation**

Information records concerning bullying and racist incidents will initially be written in class teachers' files and also reported to Senior Leaders. Information records are then held in the Family Liaison Lead's office.

Actions are outlined in the behaviour policy.

Following a discussion with a victim, closure will be recorded and placed in the child's file. However, this may be subject to review.

The Governors, Headteacher and Deputy Headteacher will monitor Bullying and Racist Incidents

## **Conclusion**

This policy should be read in conjunction with the Human Rights Act (October 2000), the Index for Inclusion the Local Authority Education Development Plan, Local Authority Behaviour Policy, Local Authority Child Protection Policy, the School Improvement Plan, the Staff Development Plan, the Equal Opportunities and Race Equality Policy, the Monitoring and Evaluation Policy and all evaluation procedures.

This policy was developed during the Spring Term 2009  
It was ratified by the Full Governing Body during the Spring Term 2009

This policy will be evaluated and reviewed by the governors bi-annually

Reviewed: Spring/Lent Term 2018  
Next Review: Spring/Lent Term 2020