



THE VINE CHRISTIAN SCHOOL
Independent School - Ages 3 to 18

Anti-bullying Policy

VCS/Anti-bullying Policy/2021

14 August 2021



About This Document

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History

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1. Introduction

- 1.1. This policy compliments our Whole School Behaviour Policy and Child Protection Policy and should be read in conjunction with these documents.
- 1.2. The Vine Christian School is completely against bullying and will not tolerate it. It is entirely opposed to our values and principles. We believe that everyone has the right to work in a safe and considerate atmosphere within the school, in which each person can flourish, becoming the person God created them to be. We also expect everyone to contribute, in whatever way they can, to the wellbeing and care of the school environment.
- 1.3. We teach the pupils to respect authority as given by God to parents, teachers and others in the School and Church communities; therefore, developing a code of respect for every individual. There are firm boundaries and high expectations regarding behaviour and positive encouragement and rewards for those who follow them. We work to maintain fair discipline throughout the school with a clear code of conduct that all staff and parents uphold.
- 1.4. When children behave in an unacceptable manner physical punishment will never be used or threatened. They will not be humiliated, nor will they be shouted at in an aggressive way. Their behaviour will be discussed to see how it can be improved in future. It will always be made clear that although the behaviour is wrong the child is still accepted and loved. The individual child's level of maturity and understanding will be considered when dealing with any behavioural problems and challenging their bullying behaviour.
- 1.5. Students have a right to learn without the fear of bullying and distress; therefore, we will not tolerate bullying behaviour. The needs of the victim are of the utmost importance and anyone that feels bullied will be listened to and taken seriously. All reported incidents will be carefully investigated and dealt with appropriately.
- 1.6. Parents will be informed of their child's inappropriate behaviour and the school will work together with the parents to ensure that the situation is rectified properly, and appropriate disciplinary action is taken.
- 1.7. Offences such as racial or physical abuse, bullying or violent behaviour will result in a 'Disciplinary Statement' being filed detailing the reason for disciplinary action being taken and the actual action taken. We will monitor and review each situation according to the nature or seriousness of the situation. Repeated offences of this nature will result in the pupil being excluded or expelled.
 - i. Bullying will not be tolerated within the school.
 - ii. We will record all incidents of bullying.
 - iii. We will inform parents and guardians of these incidents.
 - iv. A pupil will be issued with a Red Card in the first instance of bullying.
 - v. Repeated offences will result in the pupil being excluded or expelled.



2. Definition of Bullying for the purposes of this Policy:

- 2.1. Bullying is an act of hostility, causing humiliation, pain, or distress to someone. It can take several forms: physical, verbal, making gestures, blackmail, and segregation. It is an abuse of power. It can be planned and organised, or it may be unintentional. It may be carried out by individuals or by groups of pupils.
- 2.2. Forms of Bullying:
 - i. Physical violence such as hitting, pushing, or spitting at another pupil.
 - ii. Hate see Appendix I.
 - iii. Interfering with another pupil's property, by stealing, hiding, or damaging it
 - iv. Using offensive names when addressing another pupil
 - v. Teasing or spreading rumours about another pupil or his/her family
 - vi. Belittling another pupil's abilities and achievements
 - vii. Writing offensive notes or graffiti about another pupil
 - viii. Excluding another pupil from a group activity
 - ix. Ridiculing another pupil's appearance, way of speaking or personal mannerisms
 - x. Misusing technology (internet or mobiles) to hurt or humiliate another person.

3. Responsibilities

- 3.1. To combat any bullying, we will work together as staff and parents and take on the following responsibilities:
- 3.2. The staff will support the children and the school by doing the following:
 - i. Nurture self-esteem, self-respect, tolerance, and mutual respect for others in the students
 - ii. Support students in making positive choices, helping them to develop self-control and self-confidence in their interaction with those around them.
 - iii. Demonstrate by example the high standards of personal and social behaviour we expect of our pupils.
 - iv. Acknowledge the uniqueness and dignity of each student as created in the image of God.
 - v. Discuss bullying with all classes, so that every pupil learns about the damage it causes to both the child who is bullied and to the bully and the importance of telling a teacher about bullying when it happens; using assemblies and other opportunities to nurture a strong, supportive community in which everyone is valued.
 - vi. Be alert to signs of distress and other possible indications of bullying.



- vii. Listen to children who have been bullied, take what they say seriously and act to support and protect them.
 - viii. Report suspected cases of bullying to the Headteacher.
 - ix. Follow up any complaint by a parent about bullying, and report back promptly and fully on the action which has been taken.
 - x. Deal with observed instances of bullying promptly and effectively, in accordance with agreed procedures.
- 3.3. Parents will support their children and the school by doing the following:
- i. Watch for signs of distress or unusual behaviour in their children, which might be evidence of bullying.
 - ii. Advise their children to report any bullying to their supervisor and explain the implications of allowing the bullying to continue unchecked, for themselves and for other pupils.
 - iii. Advise their children not to retaliate violently to any forms of bullying.
 - iv. Be sympathetic and supportive towards their children and reassure them that appropriate action will be taken.
 - v. Keep a written record of any reported instances of bullying.
 - vi. Inform the school of any suspected bullying, even if their children are not involved.
 - vii. Co-operate with the school; if their children are accused of bullying, try to ascertain the truth, and point out the implications of bullying, both for the children who are bullied and for the bullies themselves.
- 3.4. The students will support each other and the school by doing the following:
- i. Refrain from becoming involved in any kind of bullying, even at the risk of incurring temporary unpopularity.
 - ii. Treat others as they wish to be treated themselves, contributing to the creation of a culture of mutual respect and courtesy.
 - iii. Accept responsibility for their own actions and choices, including making reparation where damage has been done.
 - iv. Intervene to protect the pupil who is being bullied unless it is unsafe to do so.
 - v. Report to a member of staff any witnessed or suspected instances of bullying, to dispel any climate of secrecy and help to prevent further instances.
 - vi. If they become the target of bullies, they should not suffer in silence, but have the courage to speak out, to put an end to their own suffering and that of other potential targets.
 - vii. Be aware of the school's 'Acceptable Use/ e-Safety rules and abide by them.



4. Preventative Measures

- 4.1. The school promotes positive behaviour through ensuring that the students are aware of the school's expectations for respect within the school community and the corrective measures that the school utilises; these are within the Student Handbook.
- 4.2. The school cultivates an awareness of the nature of bullying, its impact and how to deal with it, and encourages the growth of godly character.
- 4.3. Provision is also made for Pastoral care and staff are assisted in classroom management where needed. Guidelines for records and corrective measures are kept in the Staff Handbook and are made available for parents if requested.

5. Procedures for Dealing with Incidents of Bullying Behaviour

- 5.1. Steps taken to support and respond to the needs of both bullied and bullying pupils:
 - i. Records kept will be kept of all incidents whether minor, significant, or major.
 - ii. Action will be taken according to the school's Corrective Measures.
 - iii. The school will contact the parents/carers of all pupils concerned in the bullying incident.
 - iv. The school will endeavour to investigate the incident and give feedback to those concerned.
 - v. Sanctions will be put in place according to the severity of the incident.
 - vi. The school will contact any relevant professionals where appropriate.

6. Key Dates for The Plan

Priority	Date	Action
-	-	None at this time.

7. General

This document has been reviewed and signed as follows:

Headteacher	Signed	Date	Print name
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Governor	Signed	Date	Print name
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Appendix 1

Hate Incident and Hate Crime

Definitions:

A hate incident is legally defined as:

“any incident, which may or may not constitute a criminal offence, which is perceived by the victim or any person, as being motivated by prejudice or hate.”

Hate incidents may be based upon homophobic/sexual orientation, race/ethnicity, religion/belief, disability/SEN, gender identity. Hate incidents can consist of verbal abuse or insults for example, detrimental comments, abusive language and “jokes” relating to race, religion, disability/learning difficulties, sexual orientation, gender identity, insulting gestures, abusive telephone calls, offensive messages.

A hate crime is legally defined as:

“any hate incident, which constitutes a criminal offence, perceived by the victim or any other person, as being motivated by prejudice or hate.” (ACPO 2005 definition).

Hate incidents and bullying

Bullying is defined as:

“the repetitive, intentional hurting of one person by another(s), where the relationship involves an imbalance of power.”

Bullying can be carried out physically, verbally, emotionally or through cyberspace. This behaviour can include verbal bullying for example name calling, teasing, threatening; physical for example hitting, punching, kicking, inappropriate touching; relational bullying for example ignoring, leaving out, spreading rumours; indirect bullying, for example stealing, damaging belongings, targeted graffiti; cyber bullying for example sending abusive texts or emails.

Hate incident categories.

Ethnicity/race:

Any incident which is perceived to be racist by the victim or any other person based on ethnic origin, skin colour, nationality, culture, language, real or perceived racism.

Religion/belief:

Any incident which is perceived to be based on prejudice towards or hatred of the religion/belief of the victim or so perceived by the victim or any other person. For example, beliefs, faith, lack of faith real or perceived.



Homophobic/sexual orientation:

Any incident that is perceived by the victim, or any other person, to be motivated by a prejudice based on another person's sexuality, or perceived sexuality. For example, related to sexual orientation, or perceived orientation of target or target's family and/or homophobic/biphobic abuse and language used.

Disability/SEN:

Any incident perceived by the victim or any other person to be motivated by the offender's prejudice against people because of their disability or so perceived by the victim or any other person. For example, real or perceived disability, special needs, gifted or talented or health conditions or association with someone in those categories.

Gender identity/Transphobic:

Any incident which is perceived to be based on prejudice towards or hatred of the victim because of that person's gender identity or so perceived by the victim or any other person. For example, any incident based on gender identity that when expressed demean, intimidate, or harm another person because of their gender identity. Transgender, perceived to be transgender, or someone who does not fit with gender norms or stereotypes or who has a transgender family member.

Hate:

Hate is a strong word, used to reflect the way that hate motivated incidents can contain a message that communicates to entire groups of people that they are unwelcome and unworthy of social respect. Children and young people should understand the impact hate motivated incidents can have upon both individuals and the broader community.

Reporting

Hate crime should be reported directly to the police. The underpinning rationale behind any hate incident is perception. It is the perception of the victim or any other person (e.g., a witness) that is the determining factor.

You will need to have the following information:

- Incident date
- Where: in school, out of school?
- Incident type: ethnicity/race, sexual identity, religious/belief, gender/identity, disability/SEN, other?
- Incident category: cyber bullying, physical assault, damage, behaviour designed to exclude, verbal abuse?
- What happened: A brief description is fine, try to keep within one paragraph.
- Is this a persistent incident: yes or no?
- Action taken in support of victim(s): DSL, involve parent, restorative conversation, involve police, targeted behaviour support worker, targeted provision, involve cluster targeted services, other?
- Action taken in support of perpetrator(s): DSL, involve parent, restorative conversation, involve police, targeted behaviour support worker, targeted provision, involve cluster targeted services, other?
- Reported by: staff member, member of the public, police, peer, parent, and carer other?
- Staff member responsible: who is the member of staff who is responsible for resolving this incident?