



Crinken Anti-Bullying Policy

May 2018

Introduction:

The aim of St James Church, Crinken Anti-Bullying policy is

- To raise awareness of bullying as a form of unacceptable behaviour within all aspects of church life
- To promote an ethos which encourages children and youth to disclose and discuss incidents of bullying behaviour
- To ensure appropriate supervision and monitoring measures through which all areas of children's and youth activity are kept under observation
- To develop procedures for noting, investigating and dealing with incidents of bullying behaviour
- To work with appropriate agencies in countering all forms of bullying

Statement of Bullying:

- Every individual in the Church is entitled to respect and to be free of any type of bullying
- The Church will work proactively, as far as it can, to ensure that bullying does not take place
- Reporting incidents of bullying is responsible behaviour
- A record will be kept of all reported incidents of bullying
- The matter will be dealt with seriously
- The Church will develop a programme of support for both the bully and the bullied
- Appropriate action will be taken to ensure that it does not continue

Definition:

Bullying consists of repeated inappropriate behaviour whether by word, by physical action or otherwise, directly or indirectly applied, by one or more persons against another person or persons which undermines the individual person's right to personal dignity.

Types of behaviour deemed to be inappropriate:

- Humiliation; including name-calling, reference to academic ability etc.
- Intimidation; including aggressive use of body language
- Verbal abuse, anonymous or otherwise
- Physical abuse or threatened abuse
- Aggressive or obscene language
- The use of racial, sexual or homophobic comments or gestures
- Practical jokes which may cause others physical or emotional harm even though this may not be intended
- Offensive jokes
- Victimisation; including very personal remarks
- Exclusion and isolation
- Intrusion through interfering with personal possessions
- Repeated unreasonable assignment to duties that are obviously unfavourable
- Repeated unreasonable deadlines or tasks
- Threats, including demands for money
- An attack by rumour, gossip, innuendo or ridicule on any individual's reputation
- Any type of cyber bullying – through intimidating or demeaning messages and/or photos on social media and other information technology channels or electronic means is entirely parent/guardian responsibility

Indications of Bullying:

The following signs/symptoms may suggest that a child or youth is being bullied: -

- Anxiety about travelling to and from church events
- Unwillingness to go to church events, refusal to attend.
- Loss of concentration and loss of enthusiasm and interest in events.
- Pattern of physical illnesses (e.g. headaches, stomach aches);
- Unexplained changes either in mood or behaviour.
- Visible signs of anxiety or distress – stammering, withdrawing, nightmares, difficulty in sleeping, crying, not eating, vomiting, bedwetting;
- Spontaneous out-of-character comments about either children or volunteers;
- Possessions missing or damaged;
- Increased requests for money or stealing money;
- Unexplained bruising or cuts or damaged clothing;
- Reluctance and/or refusal to say what is troubling him/her

Those signs do not necessarily mean that a child or youth is being bullied. If repeated or occurring in combination these signs do warrant investigation in order to establish what is affecting the child or youth.

Strategies for Prevention of Bullying

- Positive self-esteem is fostered among the children and youth by celebrating individuals' differences, by acknowledging good behaviour and by providing opportunities for success
- Children and youth are helped to develop empathy by discussing feelings and by trying to put themselves in the place of others
- Volunteers and staff respond sensitively to children and youth who disclose incidents of bullying
- Staff and volunteers are particularly vigilant in monitoring children and youth who are considered at risk of bullying/being bullied
- All disclosed incidents of bullying are investigated
- Parents contribute to and support the church's policy on bullying by encouraging positive behaviour both at home and at church events, by being vigilant for signs and symptoms that their child is being bullied or is bullying others, by communicating concerns to the church leaders.

Supervision

Insofar as is reasonably practicable church activities will be supervised and monitored at all times, with particular emphasis on those occasions when situations of bullying are more likely to occur.

Volunteers / Leaders

Bullying will not be tolerated amongst volunteers, and/or leaders and/or staff under any circumstances. This must be reported immediately to the leader of the group or where a leader is the instigator, to a member of the Safe Guarding Trust Panel.

Disclosure:

Children and youth will be encouraged to disclose and discuss incidents of bullying behaviour. They will be helped to differentiate between incidents of a minor nature and those that constitute bullying. They will also be taught the difference between 'telling tales' and asking for help.

Procedures for Dealing with Instances of Bullying:

1. All incidents of bullying will be recorded in an incident book which will be retained in the church
2. A calm unemotional problem solving approach will be used to deal with bullying
3. The leader of the group will initially deal with incidents of bullying. Incidents that are of a serious nature will be referred to the Safe Guarding Trust Panel
4. An interview will then take place with the alleged perpetrator(s) and appropriate steps taken to ensure that it does not happen again
5. If on the conclusion of the preliminary investigation the leader is convinced that bullying has occurred the Safe Guarding Trust Panel will be informed and parent(s)/guardians(s) of all concerned will be contacted

Implementation

Every leader in Children's and Youth work has a role to play in the implementation of the Anti Bullying policy.

Review Process and Success Criteria

The document is to be reviewed as required by the leaders throughout the year.

This policy will apply from the date of ratification.