



## **Building Relationships at St John's C of E School**

**Love, Respect, Value**

St John's Church of England Primary School is committed to high expectations for all and to embracing equality.

*A school community has no higher task than to help children and young people develop a deep and proper sense of their worth.*

*John Cox*

Love and forgiveness will be deep rooted in our approach to behaviour.

## **What we do at St John's to promote good relationships.**

SMSC (spiritual, moral, social and cultural) development is threaded throughout the curriculum with our strong Christian ethos where children are encouraged to love their neighbour, respect each other and value diversity.

To support children in the playground we have Eagle Play Mentors whose specific role is to support positive play. As the school grows we will have Play Leaders who support the younger children. We will also have a 'Singing Playgrounds' club where children learn songs to teach to others in the playground. Lunchtime clubs will also continue to expand. The School Council will be responsible for listening to the opinions of others and deciding what play equipment needs to be updated and replaced. There will be areas on the playgrounds designated for physical and quieter play. Also when needed there will be a Lunchtime Carpet Club. We will also have Buddy Bus Stops where children can go if they don't have a friend to play with. This support encourages children to be safe and happy in school.

On occasion, children may need reminding about rules. Very rarely, when rules aren't followed and, as a result other children are not feeling safe, short term sanctions are put into place; these give children time to be calm and to think about how their play may affect others. Children who still have difficulties with learning to play, have one-to-one or small group sessions with an adult to help them to have successful playtimes.

## **Restorative Approach**

Wherever possible we seek to repair relationships as part of the resolution process. Children are expected to be friendly to, though perhaps not always friends with, everyone in the school.

The aim is for the children at St John's School to support each other very well and for reported incidents of bullying to be nil.

We are committed to fostering positive behaviours, so that every individual feels safe and supported in an environment that is free from hurtful and bullying behaviour and where any incident is dealt with quickly and effectively so that it does not escalate. This requires vigilance from staff and the co-operation and support of parents.

### **Parents raising concerns – parent-school partnership**

Staff do strive to be vigilant at all times, but we can only deal with problems that we know about. Please don't assume that we know what you know.

- If you have any concerns or are worried about your child's school life or wellbeing please speak to a member of staff. Behaviour that might be of concern could include tearfulness, bad temper, depression, being withdrawn, lowered self-esteem, unexplained head or tummy aches, reluctance to go to school.
- If your child shows changes in their behaviour, sit down with them and try to establish the reasons. Parents are strongly advised not to approach other parents or pupils directly. Please raise your concerns with members of staff.

## **How can you support your child if he/she has experienced hurtful behaviour**

- Listen carefully to how your child feels, what happened, where and when, who has been told and what has been done.
- Ask what happened before which might have contributed to the incident.
- Stay calm and measured and reassure your child that it can be sorted out with the school. Tell your child that sometimes bad things happen to everyone but they can bounce back.
- Please remember you only have part of the story.
- Help your child to report it themselves if they have not already done so, as this keeps them empowered. Or contact the school with your concerns.
- Give the school time to investigate and respond. We will keep you informed about our progress. Please keep reassuring your child.
- Expect some feedback on what has happened, but not necessarily all the details, as the school has a duty to maintain appropriate confidentiality for all the children.
- Please support the school in follow up support, for example stressing the importance of telling an adult at school, supporting work to restore self-esteem and self-worth, helping to implement any agreed strategy.
- Support your child to reconcile, repair relationships and put resolved incidents behind them.

## **How you can support your child if he/she has used hurtful behaviour**

- Listen carefully to how your child feels, what happened, where and when, who has been told and what has been done.
- Ask what happened before, which might have contributed to the incident.
- Explain that this will need to be sorted out with the school.
- While the school investigates, please remember you only have part of the story. Stay calm and measured and help your child understand why their behaviour was unacceptable.
- Reassure your child that they made a wrong choice that has consequences. You want them to be confident and strong but not hurtful.
- Support your child in co-operating with the school and implementing any strategy. Where a change of behaviour is required, practice agreed strategies so they can perform them confidently under stress.
- Encourage and praise positive change and support your child to reconcile, repair relationships and put resolved incidents behind them.

### **The school's priorities in dealing with incidents between children**

The school wishes to ensure a safe, secure and happy environment for all. However, children will have relationship problems from time to time because they are still learning social skills.

At St John's as incidents arise from behaviour that is unintentionally brought about by games getting out of hand and that lead to hurtful behavior, children will be taught that such behaviour is unacceptable. The school seeks to empower children by teaching them assertive techniques to use in response to hurtful behaviour. These strategies are designed to reduce their vulnerability and prevent any retaliatory behaviour which could escalate incidents.

In order to prevent children identifying themselves as a victim (which increases their vulnerability) and to build children's resilience and wellbeing we are careful not to allow children to label hurtful behaviour as 'bullying' when it does not apply. Behaviour is only deemed to be 'bullying' where it is deliberately hurtful, persistent and repeated, and where a child is powerless to defend themselves.

The following behaviours can cause distress and are taken seriously, but are not bullying:

- Teasing between friends where there is no deliberate intention to cause hurt
- Conflicts and disputes involving 'tit for tat' behaviour.
- Falling out between friends after a quarrel or disagreement.
- Unacceptable behaviour that all parties have at some point consented to, e.g. rough play that results in someone getting hurt.