



St Thomas the Apostle Church, New Groombridge

Anti-bullying policy for children and young people involved in church activities

Statement of intent

We at St Thomas the Apostle Church, New Groombridge 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 Church, Sunday School or Youth Group.

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. We are a “telling” church. This means that anyone who knows that bullying is happening is expected to tell the group leaders or the parish priest and Safeguarding Officer.

Vicar **Father Nicholas Henshall**

Victoria Alexander

Safeguarding Officer Beverley Hollands

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, excluding, tormenting (e.g. hiding books, threatening gestures).

Physical Pushing, kicking, hitting, punching or any use of violence.

Racist	Racial taunts, graffiti, gestures.
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Sexual Unwanted physical contact or sexually abusive comments.

Homophobic Because of or focusing on the issue of sexuality.

Verbal Name-calling, sarcasm, spreading rumors, teasing.

Cyber	All areas of internet, such as email & Internet chat room misuse. Mobile threats by text messaging and calls. Misuse of associated technology, i.e. camera and video facilities.
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Bullying hurts. None deserves to be a victim of bullying. Everybody has the right to be treated with respect. Children and young people who are bullying 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 working with children, as well as children and young people, should have an understanding of what bullying is. (appropriate inhouse training)

All adults involved in working with children 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.

We at St Thomas Church take bullying seriously. Children, young people and parents should be assured that they will be supported when bullying is reported.

Procedures

1. Report bullying incident to staff
2. In cases of serious or persistent bullying, incidents will be recorded by staff
3. In serious or persistent cases parents will be informed and asked to come into a meeting to discuss the problem.
4. If it is thought that an offence has been committed, contact Beverley Hollands, Parish Safeguarding Officer and/or Vicar, Father Nicholas Henshall, for advice, in their absence or if life is threatened contact Police.
5. The bullying behaviour or threats of bullying will be investigated, and all bullying stopped.
6. An attempt will be made to help bullies change their behaviour.
7. In serious cases those involved with bullying will be suspended or even excluded from the group.
8. After the incident/incidents have been investigated and dealt with, each case will be monitored to ensure repeated bullying does not take place again.
9. If possible, the children/young people will be reconciled.
10. After the incidents have been investigated parents/carers will be informed of the action taken.