

St Hilda's CE Primary School.

Unacceptable Language Policy

***If you can't say anything nice, then don't say anything at all!***



### **Rationale.**

This policy has been drawn up with consultation of all stakeholders and in response to specific issues raised in a pupil behaviour questionnaire and revision of the school's Acceptable Behaviour Policy. It deals with context-specific, negative, discriminatory and unacceptable language.

### **Monitoring and Recording Incidents**

The school uses **Integrus G2** Behaviour module to monitor all aspects of pupils' behaviour. The behaviours referred to in this policy would all be recorded under the 'negative behaviour' option. The Behaviour types and codes within Integrus are specified by the DFE. The behaviour types relevant to this policy are Racist Abuse, Abuse against Pupil. (Or Abuse against Adult if this was appropriate) and an additional non DFE code: Unacceptable Language.

Whilst individual incidents are to be treated seriously by being entered into the child's behaviour log, it is important for staff to be aware of any patterns of behaviours emerging for any individual or group. Repetition and frequency of incidents should be dealt with via the hierarchy of sanctions listed in the school's Acceptable Behaviour Policy.

### **Swearing**

The school has identified two types of swearing: the British Expletive and 'Swearing in home language'. By nature they are very different to detect, understand and respond to.

British Expletives are generally used at moments of high emotion, as outbursts, and as such are easy to identify. Often the meaning *behind* the expletive is not understood by the child using it, and this may need to be explored with the child on an individual level, if appropriate. Verbal outburst of this nature, as well as inappropriate gesturing are unacceptable and need to be recorded on the Integrus behaviour log: Abuse against pupil (Adult) *Sub type*: Swearing **OR** Unacceptable Language: *Sub Type*: British Expletive if the expletive was not directed at any particular individual

Swearing in home language: by its very nature this is more difficult for the majority of staff to identify and isolate, yet is often perceived to be more serious or hurtful than using British Expletives and evokes a much more powerful response from the verbally abused. *Swearing in home language* can range from seemingly low level insults against family members, to more serious insults suggesting intimate or sexual acts. It can also include insults to family members who have passed away but seems to be typified by the family 'honour' being challenged. This type of swearing can be very difficult to deal with as children are often unable/ unwilling/too embarrassed to translate the words or meaning of the derogatory language into English, and when it can be translated the sentiment behind the language can appear trivialised. Sometimes, there are other factors involved such as family feuds and the children are just verbalising the phrases heard within their families. It needs to be emphasised that such derogatory comments, no matter what the provocation, are wholly unacceptable and should be recorded on the Integrus behaviour log: Abuse against pupil (Adult) *Sub type*: Swearing in Home Language

### **Racist Abuse**

The Oxford English Dictionary defines racism as: *Prejudice, discrimination, or antagonism directed against someone of a different race based on the belief that one's own race is superior.*

The school has never tolerated racial language in any form and there has been little evidence of this as the school has been largely monocultural (Bangladeshi) for a significant number of years. Currently though the ethnic profile of the school is undergoing a period of change and instances of racial abuse may occur in the light of this. Any instance of this should be recorded on the Intergrus Behaviour Log: Racism and reported to the headteacher who completes a weekly NOHIB report (Notification of Hate Incidents of Behaviour) to the local Authority.

Contextually though, within the Bangladeshi culture there is an expressed preference for paler skin, and it has been noticed that children who have a darker skin pigmentation, although from the same race, are often stigmatised and subject to hurtful

comments. This is not acceptable and any derogatory comments referring to skin colour, whilst possibly not racist, are unacceptable and should be recorded as such on the Integris behaviour log: Abuse against pupil (Adult) : *Sub Type* : Skin Colour

### **Homophobic Language.**

Homophobic language means terms of abuse that are often used towards lesbian, gay and bisexual people, or those thought to be LGB. However, homophobic language is also often used to refer to something or someone as inferior. Phrases such as 'you're such a lezzer!' or 'those trainers are gay!', for example, may be used to insult someone or something, but without referring to actual or perceived sexual orientation. This language is often dismissed as 'harmless banter' and not thought to be particularly hurtful, especially where the intent is not to comment on someone's actual or perceived sexual orientation. However, regardless of the lack of any deliberate intent, these terms liken being gay to something that's bad, wrong or inferior. Children who use 'homophobic language' are possibly unaware why this would be deemed unacceptable and would need this to be sensitively explained to them, in ways appropriate to the age of the child and the context of the incident. All incidents would still need to be logged on Integris: Unacceptable language: *Sub Type*: Homophobic Language

### **Discriminatory Language**

Incidents of name calling/teasing because of physical features such as weight, height, wearing glasses, skin conditions such as eczema, quality of clothing, disability and other such visual attributes should be regarded as use of discriminatory language as it is being implied that such a feature is an inferior quality. This discrimination is unacceptable and any instances should be recorded on the Integris behaviour log: Unacceptable Language: *Sub Type*: Physical attributes

Similarly any discriminatory language to describe non visual attributes in a derogatory way (e.g faith, academic aptitude, Special Educational Need) should also be recorded as Unacceptable Language: *Sub Type*: Derogatory Language

### **Extremism**

The Government's definition of extremism is:

'Vocal or active opposition to fundamental British values, including democracy, the rule of law, individual liberty and mutual respect and tolerance of different faiths and beliefs; and/or calls for the death of members of our armed forces, whether in this country or overseas'.

Extremism affects individuals and communities and can be a catalyst for alienation and disaffection, potentially leading to violence. There is a need to expose extremism and reject violence and intolerance in whatever forms they take and whether it be from animal rights activists, ecological protesters, Al Qaida-influenced groups, Irish republican terrorists, racist and fascist organisations or far-right extremist groups.

Any incident of extremism, if expressed verbally should be recorded in the Integris Behaviour Log: Unacceptable Language: *Sub Type*: Extremism but should then also be directly reported to the Headteacher to be entered onto the NOHIB return.

### **Conclusion**

Whilst the application of this policy will reduce incidents of unacceptable language in school, we are unable to guarantee that our pupils will never be exposed to it and we have a responsibility to ensure that they are adequately prepared to deal with incidents when they do arise. Building pupil resilience and developing appropriate responses to such situations, through discussion and scenario modelling are essential elements in achieving this.

The content of this policy is to be shared with the pupils via collective worship/circle time discussions. It will also be shared with the Playtime Buddies and strategies developed so they can deal with such situations when they arise. Senior Management team will undertake regular scrutinies of the behaviour logs and termly reports will be made to the Governing Body via the Inclusion Sub Committee.

This policy will be reviewed in line with the priorities identified in the school development plan.