



*Believe. Achieve. Succeed Together.*

## **Iver Village Junior School**

# **Code of Practice for dealing with prejudice-related incidents in school**

**2023 - 2025**

***Article 14 – Every child has the right to think and believe what they  
want and to practise their religion***

Review Date	Reviewed by	Changes
September 2021	SCA	No changes needed
September 2023	SCA	Updated to change racism to any prejudice related incident

Children learn best and flourish in an environment where they feel respected and safe, including safe from prejudice-related incidents. Effective management of prejudice-related incidents is a crucial part of the prevention and management of prejudice-related bullying. This code of practice should be read alongside the school's Behaviour Policy and Anti-Bullying Policy.

### **Aims And Objectives:**

- To make all pupils aware of the negative influences of prejudice-related behaviour.
- To reduce the number of prejudice-related incidents across the school.
- To encourage all pupils to feel confident in referring incidents to staff.
- To support any victim of a prejudice-related incident.
- To support perpetrators to understand the impact of their actions and be shown how they can change.
- To become a telling and listening school.
- To gather reliable information about prejudice-related incidents, analyse the information at regular intervals and take appropriate action.

### **The Equality Act 2010**

This Act requires public bodies, including the school, to have due regard to the need to:

- Eliminate unlawful discrimination, harassment, victimisation and any other conduct prohibited by the Act;
- Advance equality of opportunity between people who share a protected characteristic and people who do not share it; and
- Foster good relations between people who share a protected characteristic and people who do not share it.

Two specific duties for schools aim to assist them to meet the general duty. These are:

- to publish information to show how they are complying with the Equality Duty. This must be updated at least annually.
- To prepare and publish one or more specific and measurable equality objectives at least every four years.

The school's published equality objectives for 2020-2025 are:

- To improve the attendance of all groups of children, especially our GRT children
- To narrow gaps in academic attainment and progress between pupils with and without Special Educational Needs
- To increase levels of participation for groups of pupils and parents who are underrepresented in particular aspects of school life

The Act also makes it unlawful for the school to discriminate against, harass or victimise a pupil or potential pupil in relation to admissions, the way it provides education for pupils, provision of pupil access to any benefit, facility or service, or by excluding a pupil or subjecting them to any other detriment.

### **Definition of a prejudice-related incident**

The Stephen Lawrence Inquiry Report (1999) defined a racist incident as: ‘Any incident which is perceived to be racist by the victim or any other person.’ The school has adopted an analogous definition of a prejudice-related incident, in accordance with the Equality Act 2010 and current government guidance, as follows:

*‘A prejudice-related incident is which is perceived by the victim, or any other person, to be prejudiced towards an individual due to one or more of the protected characteristics of disability, religion/belief, gender identity, race, sex or sexual orientation.’*

Just because an incident is alleged or perceived to be prejudice-related does not mean that it was in fact motivated by prejudice. But it does mean that it should be recorded and explored. The point is that if anyone thinks that the incident was prejudice-related, then it will definitely be taken seriously and investigated. Pupils may not have intended their behaviour to reflect prejudice, but at the stage of initial recording and questioning, the effects of their behaviour will be more important than their attitudes, motivation and awareness.

Prejudice-Related Incidents (like bullying) can take many forms including:

- **Verbal** Name-calling and ridicule such as racist or homophobic remarks
- **Visual** Graffiti, gestures, wearing racist or sexist insignia or showing pictures.
- **Incitement** Spreading rumours or encouraging others to participate.
- **Cyber** Abusive use of technology such as text messages, facebook or email.
- **Segregation** Excluding, isolating, ignoring or avoiding an individual from the activities or social acceptance of their peer group
- **Physical** Hitting, pushing, unwanted touching, kicking, threatening.
- **Property** Theft or damage to personal property; extortion.

Prejudice-related incidents include both direct abuse and derogatory language which may not be directed towards a target e.g. the use of the word “gay” as a way of describing things negatively. Evidence indicates that this use of language impacts negatively on children and young people who are Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual or are questioning their sexuality: *The school report: the experiences of gay young people in Britain's schools in 2012* (Stonewall).

### **Why do prejudice-related incidents occur?**

These may arise because an individual is seen to be different. Children may be seen as different because of their:

- Ethnic origin, skin colour, nationality or culture including Travellers of Irish Heritage and Gypsies/Roma (racism).
- Religion or belief
- Sexual orientation (homophobia or biphobia)
- Sex or gender identity (transphobia)
- Disability or Special Educational Needs.

It may be they are perceived to have a particular characteristic or they or they are associated with someone with that characteristic. For example, children who don't fit gender stereotypes may experience homophobic incidents and bullying; young carers of disabled adults may be bullied because they are associated with someone with disability. All these types of incident should be treated as prejudice-related incidents and addressed accordingly.

Research indicates that there are groups of children who are bullied disproportionately. These include disabled children and those who have special educational needs and children who are, or are perceived to be, homosexual (lesbian or gay).

### **Responding**

Racist or other prejudice-related behaviour in any form is totally unacceptable. It is the responsibility of all staff (teaching and non-teaching) to counter any form of racial or other prejudice-related abuse.

Prejudice-related language and behaviour must always be challenged. Explanations from staff will have a modifying effect on pupils' language, and thoughts about its use.

All children need to be aware that prejudice-related incidents will provoke a positive and effective response.

### ***Prejudice-related incidents involving pupils***

- The first rule is to respond appropriately, and not ignore, depending on the circumstances in which you become aware of the incident (it may be reported, or you may witness it first hand). Never tell children to ignore a racist or prejudice-related incident and to carry on as usual.
- Be especially careful not to make any premature judgements on, or responses to, what has happened/is being reported. However, if a pupil has been at the receiving-end of the incident, they will need to have a clear message at this point that you are concerned, supportive, available to listen, and intend to make every effort to find out what has happened and address it. All need to have the message that the school takes prejudice-related issues seriously
- As soon as possible take the time to find an appropriate space in which to gather information about what has happened
- It may be best to speak to all pupils involved, or you may decide to speak to the pupil who has experienced or is reporting the incident by themselves initially – make this judgement depending both on the circumstances, and if it is an individual pupil who has experienced the incident – on what they indicate that they would prefer. The pupil may be feeling very vulnerable at this point
- Record the details of the incident, and the nature of the prejudice - racist, homophobic, disability-related etc. All incidents must be reported to the Head Teacher/ Deputy Head using the Prejudice related Incident Recording Sheet. The incidents will be regularly reviewed by the Head Teacher with a view to identifying future appropriate action which may need to be taken within the school.
- Racist or other prejudice-related graffiti must be brought to the attention of the School Business Manager, photographed as evidence and then instantly removed.
- Sanctions are addressed in the school's Behaviour Policy, but make sure that perpetrators are not just subjected to sanctions, but have a clear understanding of why their words/actions were unacceptable. Victims of racial abuse must be made aware that action has been taken against the perpetrator

- Ensure that relevant and appropriate members of school staff/governing body are informed, and involved as and where necessary both in any action taken, and in following through.
- With the agreement of the pupil who experienced the incident, you might also consider involving pupils who can lend particular support, such as a peer mentor, a school 'buddy' and/or supportive friend/s. You will also need to make sure that any pupils involved in a supportive role have a clear understanding of the nature of prejudice, why it is wrong and unacceptable, and the implications and effects on those at the receiving end
- If appropriate, ensure that the parents/carers of all parties involved are informed. The parents/carers of either party may wish to meet with the relevant members of staff to discuss the incident, its investigation, and the outcomes

**Prejudice-related Incidents directed by pupil/s towards a member of staff:**

- Enter all details on the appropriate form
- Sanctions are dealt with in the Behaviour policy. Make sure that the perpetrators are not just subjected to sanctions, but have a clear understanding of why their words/actions were unacceptable.
- You should seek to discuss the incident with a member of the SLT, and decide upon appropriate action.

Ensure that parents/carers are informed. They may wish to meet with the member of staff to discuss the incident, its investigation, and the outcomes. Any such meeting should take place with the member of SLT with whom the incident has been discussed

**Allegations of Prejudice involving members of staff:**

Should such allegations be made they must be addressed and followed through to a conclusion. A record should be kept which carefully details the allegation, actions and outcomes.

**Cross-Curricular Links:** Teaching about different customs, religions and races and respect for difference permeates through many areas of the curriculum. Specific teaching about anti-racism, sexism and homophobia is incorporated into the PSHE programme as well as being an integral part of general school life.

## **Types of Incident and Necessary Actions:**

(prejudice refers to all types of prejudice including racism, homophobia, sexism, disablism and prejudice associated with religion)

<p><b><u>Verbal abuse and threatening behaviour:</u></b></p> <p>Examples:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Derogatory name-calling, insults, jokes, prejudice threats, prejudice language,</li> </ul>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Report incident to Head Teacher/Deputy Head</li> <li>Point out the prejudice nature of the incident, express disapproval</li> <li>Give support and counselling to victims and others involved.</li> <li>Record incident on prejudice related incident form and pass on to Head/ Deputy Head</li> </ol>
<p><b><u>Homophobic/Racist Comments and ridicule of culture:</u></b></p> <p>Examples:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>prejudice comments in the course of lessons</li> <li>Ridicule of an individual's cultural differences e.g. food, music, dress, language</li> </ul>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Member of staff should point out the prejudice nature of the comment and express disapproval.</li> <li>Give support and counselling to victims and others involved</li> <li>Report incident to designated member of staff using the prejudice related incident form.</li> <li>Teacher should initiate whole class anti- prejudice activities to raise pupil awareness</li> </ol>
<p><b><u>Physical Assault:</u></b></p> <p>Example:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Assault against a person or group</li> </ul>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Report incident to designated member of staff</li> <li>Head Teacher to question perpetrator and victim</li> <li>Give support, counselling to victim and any others involved</li> <li>As with any physical assault, if the incident is serious the school should report it to the police.</li> <li>Parents of perpetrator and victim to be informed.</li> <li>Record incident on prejudice related incident report form.</li> </ol>
<p><b><u>Damage to property or personal possessions:</u></b></p> <p>(prejudice motivated)</p>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Report incident to Head Teacher</li> <li>School to investigate and if perpetrator known then to be referred to Head Teacher</li> <li>Give support, counselling to victim and others involved</li> <li>Parents to be informed</li> <li>Record incident on prejudice related incident report form</li> </ol>
<p><b><u>prejudice Graffiti:</u></b></p>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Report graffiti to School Business Manager Photographic evidence taken</li> <li>Graffiti to be removed immediately</li> <li>If perpetrator is known then refer to Head Teacher</li> <li>Parents to be informed</li> <li>Record incident on prejudice related incident report form</li> </ol>
<p><b><u>Discriminatory behaviour:</u></b></p> <p>Example:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Refuse to cooperate with others due to their ethnic origin</li> </ul>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Point out the prejudice nature of their behaviour and show disapproval</li> <li>Support, counsel the victim.</li> <li>Report incident to Head Teacher/Deputy Head</li> <li>Parents to be informed</li> <li>Record incident on prejudice related incident report form</li> </ol>

**Incitement to behave in a Prejudice**

**manner:**

Examples:

- Incitement to others to do any of the above
- Provocative behaviour, such as wearing inappropriate badges or insignia
- Bringing materials into schools
- attempt to recruit to prejudice organisations

- 1) Remove or confiscate any materials
- 2) Report incident to Head Teacher/Equal Opportunities Co-ordinator
- 3) Parents to be informed
- 4) Record incident on prejudice related incident report form