



Building each other up –  
with God as our firm foundation

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## St. Paul's Church of England (A) Primary School

Emsworth Crescent  
Pendeford  
Wolverhampton  
WV9 5NR

Monday 13<sup>th</sup> November 2023

Dear Parents/ Carers,

### Say 'NO' approach

We know that we have wonderful children at St Paul's, all of whom have the potential to achieve great things. When we welcome visitors into school, they always comment on the manners, politeness and positive attitudes displayed by our children.

All schools should be a place of safety and security for its children (and parents). As a church school, our community should be a place of sanctuary where we love and celebrate each other, our similarities and our differences and treat others with respect; regardless of age, gender, orientation, faith, race, ethnicity, family structure, appearance, ability or background. Our school motto '*Building each other up, with God as our firm foundation*' applies strongly here. We should seek to help others and make a positive difference to them and the world around us, not to tear them down with unkind words or actions.

We have recently been experiencing a concerning increase in behaviour that is in conflict with our school ethos and values.

A small number of children have been:

- hitting and kicking
- pushing and shoving
- name-calling
- swearing
- using racist/offensive terminology towards others.

This type of behaviour has no place in our school as we want to foster a **SAFE** learning environment, where children and adults are **RESPECTFUL** towards each other and are **PREPARED** for learning and their lives outside of school.

Language or behaviour that is abusive toward others **will NOT be tolerated**. It is important that we educate the children now to learn more effective ways of dealing with difficult situations rather than lashing out. As they get older, the consequences of unacceptable or anti-social behaviour and language become more serious and can have significant impact on future life chances and opportunities.

In light of the above, and as part of **Anti-Bullying Week**, we are launching a 'zero tolerance' approach to certain target behaviours that we seek to eradicate from our school community and empower children to stand up to unacceptable behaviours, positively and without retaliation. The '**Say No**' approach encourages children experiencing any of the below unacceptable behaviours to say 'no' (firmly but politely), walk away and report to an adult. Staff will then take the time to find out what has happened and identify an appropriate way to respond.

We use restorative conversations following an incident, to encourage children to reflect on what happened, their actions and the actions of others, and recognise the impact of these actions. Time is also spent discussing how the situation could be handled differently in the future and how those involved could resolve the situation.

The *Say 'No' approach*, takes a zero-tolerance approach to incidents that fall under the following categories:

1. Name-calling (referring to another with a name that is not their own; disrespectful comments; rude words)
2. Violence (slapping, punching, kicking, flicking, pushing, shoving, grabbing etc) including threats of violence
3. Racism (making negative comments or excluding another due to: skin colour, faiths; beliefs; religious dress and symbolism; accents; hair types or styles etc)
4. Retaliation to any of the above.

A poster outlining these will be displayed around school and can be found at the bottom of this letter.

We ask that if your child finds themselves dealing with an incident above, then they follow three simple steps for conflict resolution:

1. Say, 'No!'
2. Walk away
3. Tell a grown-up

Whilst we respect and appreciate that our families may have different attitudes towards tackling conflict, such as, "If someone hits you, hit them back," we urge that all families support us in the Say 'No!' approach. If children are told to use a different approach, they will be presented with confusing messages which may cause them to become anxious: they will want to follow school rules but also not let their families down. Also, when told, "If someone hits you, hit them back," the message given is that *some* violence is acceptable, when the stance St Paul's takes is that **ALL violence is unacceptable.**



As adults, it is important that we promote and model positive, acceptable behaviours and work in partnership together to ensure that our children are able to grow and develop into positive members of society.

A child who is found to have committed one of the above acts towards another, will receive an instant red-light and their grown-ups will be contacted that day to discuss an appropriate sanction. Continued incidents of unacceptable behaviour may result in an escalation of consequences including;

Loss of playtime and / or lunchtime (may range from 1 to several across a week)

Loss of privileges (school trips, extra curricular clubs or events)

Isolation from peers – learning in another class.

Isolation from peers – learning in a separated room. (from a lesson to half a day, full day or several days)

Alternative provision – a placement arranged at another local school for a day or more.

Suspension – temporary exclusion from school

Permanent exclusion (in extreme circumstances)

These sanctions should rarely be required. However, it is important that children and parents understand the action that school may take if behaviour falls below our expectations.

The Bible says;

“You have heard that it was said, ‘Eye for eye, and tooth for tooth.’ But I tell you, do not resist an evil person. If anyone slaps you on the right cheek, turn to them the other cheek also. And if anyone wants to sue you and take your shirt, hand over your coat as well. Matthew 5:38-40

‘Turning the other cheek’ is a phrase in Christian doctrine from the *Sermon on the Mount* that refers to responding to insult without retort. This passage is variously interpreted as accepting one's predicament, commanding non-resistance or advocating Christian pacifism.

The ‘Say No’ approach will be launched in school on Monday as part of our Anti-Bullying Week worship and our expectations around behaviour will be made explicit to the children.

Consistency is required with a zero-tolerance approach to hurting others or being abusive and therefore, this may mean an initial rise in the number of children being issued with red lights. This is to ensure that children understand that there are consequences to their actions and putting the safety and wellbeing of others at risk will not be tolerated. We anticipate that this should be temporary and once embedded, hope to see unacceptable behaviours being reduced.

Nobody wants their child to be on the receiving end of unacceptable behaviour. As a school community, let's work together, support each other and give consistent messages to achieve, and maintain, a harmonious environment for learning and for all.

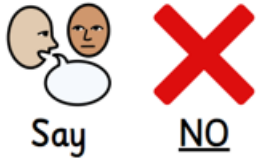
Yours sincerely,

Mrs J Ferretti      and      Mr L Davis-Powell  
(Headteacher)                      (Deputy Headteacher)





At St Paul's, we are: safe, prepared and respectful.



Say

NO

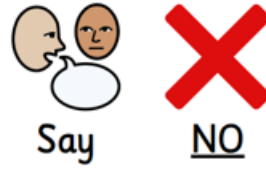


to

**name-calling!**



At St Paul's, we are: safe, prepared and respectful.



Say

NO

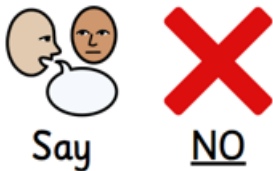


to

**violence!**



At St Paul's, we are: safe, prepared and respectful.



Say

NO

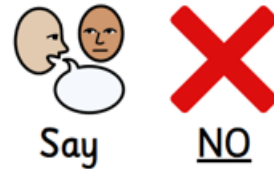


to

**retaliation!**

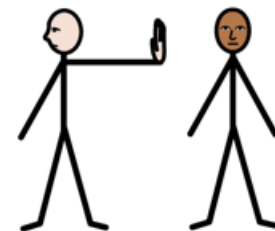


At St Paul's, we are: safe, prepared and respectful.



Say

NO



to

**racism!**

