

Anti-bullying Policy



The Governing Body of St Joseph's Catholic Primary School approved this policy in November 2020.

RATIONALE

We are committed to providing a caring, friendly and safe environment for all our children so they can learn in a relaxed and secure atmosphere. **Bullying of any kind is unacceptable and not tolerated at St Joseph's.** If it does occur, all children know they need to tell an adult and that incidents will be dealt with promptly, effectively and considerately. Indeed anyone who knows or thinks that bullying is happening is expected to tell a member of staff or the headteachers. We believe that every child has the right to be safe and happy at school and to be protected when they feel vulnerable.

This policy is based on the Department for Education's statutory guidance [Keeping Children Safe in Education \(2019\)](#) and [Working Together to Safeguard Children \(2018\)](#),

WHAT IS BULLYING?

The Anti-Bullying Alliance (ABA) defines bullying as "the repetitive, intentional hurting of one person or group by another person or group, where the relationship involves an imbalance of power."

Therefore, 'Bullying' is the use of behaviour with the intention of hurting another person on repeated occasions. An incident which happens on a single occasion will be dealt with using St Joseph's 'Behaviour Policy'

Bullying can be complex in nature and is not always easy to define. Having an agreed definition of bullying is crucial as professionals, parents/carers, children and young people need to make the distinction between what is relational conflict and what is bullying.

RELATIONAL CONFLICT	BULLYING
Equal power	Imbalance of power
Happens occasionally	Repeated negative action
Accidental	Deliberate
Remorseful	No remorse
Effort to solve problem	No effort to solve problem

- Deliberately hurtful (including emotional, physical and verbal aggression)
- Repeated over a period of time
- Difficult for victims to defend themselves against

BULLYING CAN TAKE MANY FORMS AND CAN INCLUDE:

- Emotional – being unfriendly, excluding, tormenting
- Physical assault – pushing, kicking hitting, punching or any use of violence
- Verbal – name calling, sarcasm, spreading rumours, teasing
- Making threats – threatening gestures
- Cyberbullying – bullying via mobile phone or online (e.g. email, social networks and instant messenger), misuse of technology (e.g. internet usage, phones, messaging, camera and video)
- Racist – racial taunts, graffiti, gestures

- Homophobic – using the term ‘gay’ in a negative context is unacceptable e.g. the use of the word in slang to suggest that something or someone is inferior or different.
- Sexual – unwanted physical contact, suggestive or sexually abusive comments

PREVENTION

Our response to bullying does not start at the point at which a child has been bullied. The school staff proactively gathers intelligence about issues between children which might provoke conflict and develop strategies to prevent bullying occurring in the first place. This involves talking to children about issues of difference, in lessons, through dedicated events or projects, or through assemblies. Staff themselves will be able to determine what will work best for their pupils, depending on the particular issues they need to address.

We strive to create an ethos of good behaviour, based on Gospel values (‘love your neighbour as yourself’ Matthew 22:39) where pupils treat one another and the school staff with respect because they know that this is the right way to behave.

Our Vision and Values statement emphasises what is expected of the whole community of St Joseph’s, pupils, staff and parents:

We are united in faith and love

- We are inspired to live out our faith by following the example of Jesus Christ.
- We nurture positive attitudes and relationships by supporting and serving each other.

We are respectful

- We are respectful of ourselves, one another, our community and the environment.
- We take responsibility for our actions.
- We welcome and embrace our similarities and our differences by respecting others’ views and beliefs.

Values of respect for staff and other pupils, an understanding of the value of education, and a clear understanding of how our actions affect others permeate the whole school environment and are reinforced by staff and older pupils who set a good example to the rest. Positive relationships are encouraged as part of our school ethos. There will also be opportunities in PSHE throughout the school day.

St Joseph’s trains pupil ‘Peer Mediators’ and ‘Friendship Ambassadors’ each year to assist the staff in preventing conflict and encouraging positive relationships.

PROMOTION OF THE SCHOOL POLICY ON BULLYING

Each year, St Joseph’s has a dedicated week to ‘Friendship and Anti-Bullying’ and during this week, pupils are proactively involved in discussions and activities around what makes good friendships and what is bullying / what to do about bullying.

This week involves cross-curricular activities; story writing; drama; literature; assemblies; pupil led activities and, when appropriate, outside visitors and engagement with national campaigns.

CHILDREN AND YOUNG PEOPLE

Under the Children’s Act 1989 a bullying incident should be addressed as a child protection concern when there is ‘reasonable cause to suspect that a child is suffering, or is likely to suffer, significant harm’. Where this is the case, the school staff should report their concerns to their local authority children’s social care. Even where safeguarding is not considered to be an issue, schools may need to draw on a range of external services to support the pupil who is experiencing bullying, or to tackle any underlying issue which has contributed to a child engaging in bullying.

Staff are alert to the groups of children who may be particularly vulnerable to bullying. It is important to recognise that any child is at risk of being bullied and we need to be alert and active in dealing with any issues raised.

All pupils are discussed during half termly Pupil Progress Meetings and vulnerable pupils are identified for possible interventions such as mentoring.

INTERVENTION

We will apply disciplinary measures to pupils who bully in order to show clearly that their behaviour is wrong. Disciplinary measures will be applied fairly, consistently, and reasonably taking account of any special educational needs or disabilities that the pupils may have and taking into account the needs of vulnerable pupils. It is also important to consider the motivations behind bullying behaviour and whether it reveals any concerns for the safety of the perpetrator. Where this is the case the child engaging in bullying may need support themselves.

Action to be taken will include:

1. Detailed description of the situation recorded. Bullying issues will be logged in the both the SLT and respective class Behaviour file.
2. Pupils discuss situation with class teacher in the first instance or Headteachers as appropriate.
3. Parents of both pupils spoken to.
4. Sanctions such as removal from the playground for a set period of time / removal from the classroom for a set period of time / lunchtime reflection for a set period of time / pupils going on report will be considered as appropriate.

Mentoring programmes will be considered at this stage, too, for both parties involved in a bullying situation.

Further sanctions can be handed down if situation repeats or incident is more serious:

- Pupil removed from classroom for a longer period of time (Internal exclusion - e.g. 1 day).
- Pupil sent home for a set period of time (e.g. fixed term external exclusion).
- Pupil excluded from school (permanent exclusion).

N.B. Matters will be dealt with in a confidential manner – not all details of school actions / consequences / sanctions will be shared with other children's parents.

If parents are unhappy with action that the school has taken, parents are encouraged in the first instance to engage with school staff and bring concerns to their attention immediately.

Following this, parents have the right to make a formal complaint to the school's Governing Body. A copy of the complaints procedure will be provided to the parent on request and is available on the school website.

PROCEDURES TO FOLLOW

For dealing with problems between friends and conflicts between children (relational conflict) pupils are taught to proactively take a three-step approach:

1. Say 'I don't like that', then walk away;
2. If the behaviour is repeated say 'I don't like that – if you do it again I will tell a grown-up', then walk away;
3. If the behaviour is still repeated immediately tell a grown-up

Trained Peer Mediators and a certified anti-bullying mentor are available to support children to resolve issues in a positive and fair way. All pupils understand the school's approach and are clear about the part they can play to prevent bullying, including when they find themselves as bystanders. They are taught to use these strategies:

- Immediately tell an adult if you, or someone else, is feeling unhappy at school for any reason.
- If you cannot tell an adult, tell a close friend so that they can support you to inform an adult.
- Do not listen to other children who tell you not to tell. Bullies only grow stronger if they are not reported and they are scared of being discovered.
- Do not stand by whilst others are bullied. This helps the bully.
- Report any bullying you see or know about.

When bullying is reported the child's class teacher will be informed. Details will be sought by the class teacher and passed to the Executive Headteacher / Head of School. Parents/Carers of children displaying bullying behaviours or on receiving end of bullying behaviours will be informed and separately invited to discuss what has happened.

BULLYING OUTSIDE SCHOOL PREMISES

Teachers have the power to discipline pupils for misbehaving outside the school premises "to such an extent as is reasonable". This can relate to any bullying incidents occurring anywhere off the school premises, such as on school or public transport or in the local vicinity. Where bullying outside school is reported to school staff, it should be investigated and acted on. The Headteachers should also consider whether it is appropriate to notify the police of the action taken against a pupil. If the misbehaviour could be criminal or poses a serious threat to a member of the public, the police should always be informed.

CYBER BULLYING

E-Safety is an important element of our core and extended curriculum. However, occasionally issues surrounding cyber-bullying do come to our attention and as the majority of these take place out of school, the school takes a supportive rather than a punitive approach to managing such concerns. When incidents of cyber and text bullying are brought to the school's attention, the following steps are put in place:

- Evidence is presented to one of the Headteachers.
- The parents of all children involved are informed.
- Headteacher speaks to the individual or group as is appropriate.
- Class teacher further reinforces key messages with class/year group that week.
- Person being bullied and perpetrator(s) are supported through the schools anti-bullying strategy

MONITORING

- We never ignore suspected bullying.
- We don't make premature assumptions.
- We listen carefully to all accounts.
- We adopt a problem-solving approach which moves pupils on from justifying themselves.
- We follow-up regularly to check bullying behaviour has not resumed.
- All incidents of bullying will be recorded and communicated to the Headteachers.
- Incidents of bullying of pupils with Special Educational Needs or disabilities (SEND) will be referred to the Inclusion Manager.

The Headteachers will keep records of bullying incidents and will be review regularly. They will be surveyed to reveal:

- How frequently pupils have been bullied

- How it has happened
- How often they have bullied others
- Whom they tell
- What action was taken and by whom
- Where bullying took place

The Head of School will provide a termly report about the incidence of bullying to governors via the C&S committee confidential report. Information from each review will be used to target further action and, if necessary, adapt the school Anti-Bullying and Behaviour Policy.

IMPACTS AND OUTCOMES

Our anti-bullying policy promotes the following measurable impact and outcomes:

- Children who feel safe and secure and enjoy and achieve
- Children who feel able to speak out and challenge bullying and intimidation
- Children who make socially responsible choices around social interactions
- Children who are independent and confident and make choices based on what it is best for their growth and development without being susceptible to peer influence or intimidation
- Parents and carers who are confident that their children are safe and happy at school and can achieve well
- Children who are confident to speak out and challenge bullying
- Children who understand that bullying is a complex psychological relationship which can be understood and challenged
- Children, who leave school with resilience and the emotional intelligence to recognise bullying, challenge it and respond to it throughout their future lives.

EVIDENCE INDICATORS

The evidence base for the effectiveness of this policy will include:

- Questionnaires with students, parents and carers
- The viewpoint of children on issues around bullying
- The instance of bullying
- Referrals to the Local Authority
- Instances of school refusal and attendance related to bullying