



ANTI BULLYING POLICY

St John's Catholic Primary School

2022/2023

This policy was adopted November 2021

This policy will be reviewed November 2023

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1 Introduction

At St John's Catholic Primary School our Mission Statement is clear: "Through Jesus Christ, all our children learn to love and love to learn. The family of St. John's love learning and are life-long learners. Through Jesus Christ everyone knows how to show love to others and God, remembering kindness comes first. As a school community, we work together to provide a caring, stimulating and nurturing environment, where every child can discover their true potential and grow closer to Christ. We recognise that bullying can occur. When it does it can be harmful both physically and emotionally. It can also be a sign that the child carrying out the bullying has underlying issues that need to be addressed. The purpose of this policy is to enable adults in the school to recognise bullying when it takes place and to deal with it effectively. Our Anti-Bullying Policy operates in conjunction with our Behaviour Policy.

What is bullying?

Bullying is deliberately hurtful behaviour. It is usually repeated, often over a period of time and when it is difficult for those being bullied to defend themselves. We believe that there are a number of types of bullying:

Emotional: excluding from a group, tormenting, ridiculing, and humiliating

Physical: hitting, punching, pinching kicking or taking someone's belongings.

Verbal: name-calling, insulting, indirect bullying, through spreading stories about someone, threats, making fun of someone

Racist: racial taunts, gestures, making fun of someone's culture or religion

Sexual: unwanted physical contact, sexually abusive or sexist comments

Cyber: setting up hate websites, offensive e-mails and texts, sharing images without consent, harassment over whatsapp, snapchat or alike

1.1 Bullying is not:

An odd occasion falling out with friends, name calling, arguments or when the occasional 'joke' is played on someone. Children do sometimes fall out or say things because they are upset. When occasional problems of this kind arise, it is not classified as bullying. It is an important part of a child's development to learn how to deal with friendship breakdowns, the odd name-calling or childish prank. We all have to learn how to deal with these situations and develop social skills to repair relationships. School will support with children's understanding of how to deal with the breakdown of friendships.

It is bullying if it is done repeatedly and on purpose. Whenever the opportunity arises it must be made profoundly clear that we will not tolerate bullying at St John's. We are committed to providing a caring, friendly and safe environment for all our pupils so that they can grow and learn in a relaxed and safe environment. Our approach to behaviour is based on Gospel values.

Why do we tackle bullying?

We tackle bullying as an issue because we are a Catholic, caring school and we believe that:

- we are created in the likeness and image of God and respect the dignity of one another
- bullying makes people unhappy and leads to low self-esteem
- pupils who are being bullied are unlikely to concentrate fully on their school work
- some pupils avoid being bullied by not attending school
- pupils who observe unchallenged bullying behaviour may copy this anti-social behaviour
- we wish to build the self-esteem of all pupils, especially bullies and victims.

Role of Parents/carers

Parents/carers have an important part to play in our anti bullying policy.

We ask parents/carers to:

- Look out for unusual behavior in their child – for example not wanting to attend school, feeling ill regularly, or not completing work to their usual standard
- Always take an active role in your child's education, enquire how their day has gone, who they have spent time with etc
- Inform the school of any concerns. Your complaint will be taken seriously and appropriate action will be taken
- Inform the school immediately if you feel a child has bullied your child. Please do not approach that child in the playground or on their way home
- Not use social media such as Facebook or Whatsapp groups to air your concerns but rather talk to school about it
- Not advise your child to fight back or to repeat the bullies' behaviour. This will only make the situation worse
- Tell your child it is not their fault they are being bullied
- Reinforce the school policy on bullying and ensure your child is not afraid to ask for help
- Encourage children to tell the school if they feel that they are being bullied
- Support schools actions in trying to resolve any situation as quickly as possible so that all parties can move forward.

Procedures for reporting and responding to bullying incidents

Allegations and incidents of bullying at St John's Catholic Primary School will be taken seriously by all staff and dealt with impartially and promptly. All of those involved will have the opportunity to be heard.

Staff will support all children involved whilst the allegations and incidents are investigated and resolved. Pupils or parents/carers troubled by bullying must discuss their concerns with members of staff as soon as possible and the following procedure will be acted upon:

- Incidents must be reported to class teachers (both of victim and bully) and logged on CPOMs
- The class teacher will then report the matter to the Headteacher or Deputy Headteacher
- The Headteacher/Deputy Headteacher will investigate allegations with the children involved, all sides of the story will be heard and recorded in writing and later logged on CPOMs
- Where possible witnesses to reported events will be asked to share their observations
- The Headteacher or Deputy or class teacher where appropriate will contact the parents/carers of the bullying child immediately and ask them into to school to discuss the concerns. The parent of the child reporting bullying will also be contacted and made aware of the situation and next steps that will be taken
- A child found bullying will be excluded from activities where the safety and welfare of others is in jeopardy. Discussion based around school rules, Gospel values, health and wellbeing and mental health may follow. A restorative justice approach will be taken in the first instance. The child who feels victimised will be given the opportunity to address the child who is demonstrating bullying behaviours. Strategies will be put in place to end the bullying immediately. Staff will carefully monitor the situation and the Health and Wellbeing mentor will be involved in the situation. Any strategies and discussions will be shared with both sets of parents and both children so all parties clearly understand the situation and next steps
- If bullying continues the incident will be investigated. If the case of bullying is proven to the Headteacher the child showing bullying behaviours maybe excluded for a fixed term from school. If the behaviours continue after this a full exclusion maybe appropriate. St John's will not support bullying behaviours at school.

Incidents identified as racist, sexual, homophobic or gender linked are logged and a record kept using the West Sussex proforma. Pupils are encouraged, however, to learn how to deal with bullying themselves by gaining appropriate strategies to develop confidence and coping with negative peer pressure. In particular, appropriate, immediate reporting to an adult in school is strongly encouraged.

Strategies for the prevention and reduction of bullying

Whole school initiatives and proactive teaching strategies will be used throughout the school to develop a positive learning environment with the aim of reducing the opportunities for bullying to occur. The school will participate in anti-bullying week each year. We will also ensure that our PSHE curriculum covers bullying and empowers children to speak out when they see something that makes them feel uncomfortable at school or outside of school. Weekly Gospel assemblies will often focus on Catholic values and ensure that treating each other with love is part of our whole school ethos.

Anti-bullying is not seen as a one week activity but is weaved through the curriculum of St John's. With this approach we hope to empower and educate children to treat each other with care and to know what to do if things do go wrong.