

St. Joseph's Catholic Primary School



ANTI-BULLYING STRATEGY

1. **Rationale**
 - 1.1. A catholic school is a place where :
 - every child is known and loved
 - co-operation is preferred to confrontation
 - compassion and forgiveness are in abundance
 - 1.2. Bullying, if allowed to occur in school, can make a pupil's life miserable. Every pupil has a basic right to feel free of the threat of bullying. If we recognise that there may, on occasions, be a problem with bullying in school and develop an agreed strategy and guidelines for dealing with it, then, as a school, we are more likely to deal effectively with the issue.
2. **Aims**
 - 2.1. The approach of staff and children to a bullying problem of whatever magnitude should be dealt with in the light of Jesus's commandment "*Love one another as I have loved you.*" (John 13 v 34). We want at all times to preserve the dignity of each individual and to encourage and teach the children to respect this concept.
 - 2.2. This strategy aims to define bullying for the school community and to communicate key issues to pupils, staff, governors and parents.
 - 2.3. This strategy provides a framework to address all bullying effectively.
3. **Guidelines**
 - 3.1. Good order and mutual respect are essential to teaching and learning. The anti-bullying strategy is closely related to the behaviour, teaching and learning , PSHE, Equal opportunities, SEN and Internet policies.
 - 3.2. It is everyone's responsibility to prevent bullying.
 - 3.3. To ensure that any incidents that do take place are dealt with promptly and effectively.
4. **What is bullying?**
 - 4.1. Bullying is a conscious and wilful repetitive act of aggression and/or manipulation by one or more people against another person or people. It is also an abuse of power by those carrying out the bullying, which is designed to cause harm.
 - 4.2. Bullying can take many forms, but three main types are:
 - Physical- hitting, kicking, taking belongings
 - Verbal-name calling, insulting, making offensive remarks
 - Indirect- spreading nasty stories about someone, exclusion from social groups, being made the subject of malicious rumours and cyber-bullying.

4.3. We would not regard an occasional fight or quarrel between equals as falling within our school's understanding of bullying.

5. **What is racial, transgender, homophobic harassment?**

5.1. Harassment of this nature is an act which may be verbal or physical and which include attacks on the person as well as property, suffered by individuals or groups because of their colour, race, nationality, ethnic or religious origin, or sexual orientation, where the victim believes that the perpetrator was acting on grounds of discrimination and/or there is evidence of racism.

6. **What is institutional racism?**

6.1. This is defined in the Stephen Lawrence Inquiry (Macpherson) Report as:

The collective failure of an organisation to provide an appropriate and professional service to people because of their colour, culture or ethnic origin. It can be seen or detected in processes, attitudes and behaviour which amount to discrimination through unwitting prejudice, ignorance, thoughtlessness and racist stereotyping which disadvantage minority ethnic people.

7. **The School's Approach**

7.1. We believe that if children are encouraged to be good citizens in an environment where they feel stimulated and excited by their learning, it will minimize the occurrence of bullying. We feel it is important to create an atmosphere where our children know that they will be listened to, and where their problems and worries are taken seriously and responded to with sensitivity.

7.2. Our curriculum will ensure that every year group addresses issues related to bullying. This may take the form of an explicit approach or maybe implicit, in terms of looking at friendships and valuing each other to develop individual self-confidence. In addition to this, the issue of bullying in its many forms is the focus of circle time discussions and nurture groups.

7.3. Every class addresses the annual Anti-Bullying Week by the Anti-Bullying Alliance. www.anti-bullyingalliance.org.uk

7.4. Incidences of bullying brought to the attention of the class teacher are investigated as soon as possible. Information is gathered from pupils

and any staff concerned. Any relevant observations are recorded in the teacher's records and the Headteacher is kept informed.

- 7.5. We recognise that many factors connected with bullying are outside of the school's control, in relation to home life or situations outside of the school, however we do believe that a consistent whole school approach can make a difference and reduce the incidence of bullying. The following factors within the school are considered important in preventing bullying:
- the creation of a 'safe' environment for children, both in terms of physical spaces and also of adequate supervision,
 - the provision of many opportunities to increase all children's self-esteem,
 - a climate of 'openness' and trust throughout the school,
 - consistency in the way that adults respond to bullying.

- 7.6. All within the school must take bullying, or allegations of bullying and racism, seriously. Children must be given time to talk and time must be set aside to investigate allegations and to listen to what children are saying. Incidents need to be resolved, not just smoothed over.

- 7.7. We have two main aims when reacting to incidents of bullying:

1. To make the victim feel safe.
2. To encourage better behaviour from the bullies, colluders and observers.

In order to achieve this we use a range of strategies appropriate to the nature, severity and history of bullying. Possible approaches to be used are as follows:

- Assertiveness training for victims: without leading on to aggressiveness, victims can be taught to increase their own self-esteem and become more assertive when faced by a bully.
- Restitution by bullies: discipline practices for bullies should emphasise restitution and positive behaviour rather than punishment. Service to the school community as a whole is often appropriate.

Our first priority as a school is to stop the abuse, not necessarily punish the offender. There should always be an opportunity for bullies to 'put the situation right'.

- 7.8. If the bullying is a recently established behaviour by an individual or a group which involves regular name calling, or intimidation or social exclusion (but not gross physical violence) a problem solving approach is adopted. The underlying intention is to change the dynamics of the

situation, to raise awareness of the participants about bullying, and to support the peer group in taking responsibility for bullying. It is a seven-step approach (see appendix A).

- 7.9. If the bullying involves an individual or group, who have been involved in bullying on a previous occasion and the school has previously implemented the above problem solving approach, then the following procedure will be followed:
- The Headteacher is informed.
 - The victim is interviewed and comments recorded.
 - The bully or bullies is/are interviewed and comments recorded.
 - The parents of the bully are contacted and invited to a meeting
 - A meeting between the Headteacher, bully and parents is held. The incidents are outlined and the sanctions are detailed.
 - Individual Behaviour Plans to set targets to improve and monitor behaviour are set up which may involve calling upon the expertise of outside agencies.
- 7.10. In persistent circumstances sanctions may include:
- Permanent exclusion
 - Temporary exclusion
 - Exclusion from the school premise at lunchtime
 - Exclusion from the playground at lunchtime
 - Move out of current class
 - Arrangements for parent to supervise pupil to and from school daily
- 7.11. The parents/carers of the victim are kept informed throughout the whole process.
- 7.12. Guidelines for children about bullying in and out of school, as detailed in Appendix D, will be displayed in each classroom.
8. **The Role of the Governing Body**
- 8.1. The anti-bullying strategy is the governors' responsibility and they review its effectiveness annually. They do this by examining the school's anti-bullying records and by discussion with the headteacher. Governors analyse information with regard to gender, age and ethnic background of all children involved in bullying incidents.
- 8.2. The governing body responds within ten days to any request from a parent to investigate incidents of bullying. In all cases, the governing body notifies the headteacher and asks them to conduct an investigation into the case and to report back to a representative of the governing body.

- 8.3. This strategy is monitored on a day-to-day basis by the headteacher, who reports to governors about the effectiveness of the strategy on request.

Safeguarding

St Joseph's School has a duty to 'safeguard and promote the welfare of pupils' (Education Act 2002) and to ensure that children and young people are safe from bullying and discrimination (Children Act 2004). See also: Safeguarding and Child Protection Policy.

Appendix A

Problem Solving Approach

Step 1: The Victim is Interviewed

Once it has been established that a child has been the victim of bullying, the child is interviewed. The main focus of the interview is the affect the bullying has had upon the child. He or she is asked if they want to pursue the issue. If appropriate the child maybe asked to draw a picture or write a poem to describe the effect the bullying has had on them. The child is then asked who he or she would like to attend a meeting who might help to make their lives much safer at school (outlined in step 2)

Step 2: A Meeting is Convened With People Involved

A small group of pupils is asked to meet with the teacher or the person who is handling the incident. This will include those doing the bullying, others who have witnessed it but have not taken part, and other members of the peer group who may not have been involved at all but who could make a positive contribution.

Step 3: The Problem is Explained to the Group

The bullying is explained to the children and is emphasized that the bullying makes the victim feel distressed. The others are read the child's poem or shown the picture; either is used as the basis for discussion. No one is blamed for the bullying but solutions are sought.

Step 4: The Responsibility is Shared

The group shares the responsibility for the bullying. Although blame is not attributed and punishments are not meted out, the act of bullying has to be acknowledged so the group can move onto the next stage.

Step 5: The Group is Asked for its Ideas

The group is asked what they feel should be done. After brainstorming, individual suggest solutions, how they feel they can help, and what they will do. Good positive suggestions for making things better are sought.

Step 6: It is Left Up to the Group

The responsibility for carrying out their suggestions is left up to the group. They go away feeling they will do something positive that is supported by the teacher who has conducted the session and in conjunction with the effects of the peers.

Step 7: A review meeting with the Victim

A week or so later the teacher meets up with the child to find out what improvements have been made.

Step 8: Meet the Group Again

The group meets again to discuss what they have done and what effect they have had and have some feedback from the meeting the teacher has had with the victim.

Problem Solving Approach Recording Sheet

Name:

1. The Victim is Interviewed. (Effect of bullying/ notes of incident/ preparation for meeting)
2. A Meeting is Convened With People Involved. (Notes/ Record names and involvement)
3. The Problem is Explained to the Group/ The Responsibility is Shared. (Explain how the victim feels/ actions of others)
5. The Group is Asked for its Ideas – What will they do? (Record positive suggestions)
A review meeting with the Victim. (Date/ Notes)
Meet the Group Again (Date/ Notes)

Appendix B

Action Against Bullying
A Guide for Staff

Action: Some dos and don'ts

First steps:

- Do remain calm, you are in charge. Reacting emotionally may add to the bully's fun and give the bully control.
- Do take the incident or report seriously.
- Do think hard about whether your action needs to be public or private.
- Do reassure the victims; don't make them feel inadequate or foolish.
- Do offer concrete help, advice and support to the victim(s).
- Do ask the victim what ideas they have to help themselves – the more they can solve, the better their self image will be.
- Do make it plain to the bully that you disapprove
- Do encourage the bully to see the victim's point of view
- Do punish the bully if you have to, but be very careful how you do this. Reacting aggressively or punitively gives the message that it is O.K. to bully, if you have the power.
- Do explain clearly the punishment and why it is given.

Involving others:

- Do inform the appropriate senior teacher of what you are doing and any other colleagues if the incident arose where others should be vigilant, e.g. supervising toilets.

Final steps:

- Do make sure the incident doesn't live on through reminders from you.
- Do try to think ahead to prevent a recurrence, if possible.

What to avoid:

- Do not humiliate the bully.
- Don't be over protective, and refuse to allow the victim to help themselves.
- Don't assume the bully is bad through and through; try to look objectively at the behaviour with the bully.
- Don't call in the parents, without having a constructive plan to offer.

Listening to children – some hints:

Accept reports of bullying from children:-

Attend to what is being said, without displaying shock or disbelief. Be patient, wait during silences; prompt gently – “And?” . . .

Accept what is said (“believe” is too strong) – keep an open mind if you can.

Annotate, jot down notes of the main details.

Allay fears: reassure the child that she/he was right to tell you (do not promise confidentiality though).

Assuage any guilt: reassure the pupil that it is not his/her fault that she/he is being bullied, and that it is vital the situation is sorted out.

Remember that the person the child is talking about may be an adult

Talking with the alleged bully.

Hear the bully’s story objectively.

In dealing with the bully there are three positive aims:

1. To stop the bullying behaviour immediately.
2. To change the pupil’s attitude and behaviour for the future.
3. To reconcile the pupils involved, if possible – this may well mean a meeting between the victim and bully.

Appendix C

Action Against Bullying
A Guide for Parents

Awareness

Parents often see signs which may indicate that their child is being bullied, e.g.

- Becoming withdrawn or moody
- Becoming uncharacteristically difficult or argumentative
- Aggressive behaviour
- Fear of going to school
- Schoolwork problems
- Missing possessions
- Regular disturbed sleep or nightmares
- Bed-wetting
- Stealing
- Unexplained injuries
- Low self-esteem

Action:

If you believe your child is being bullied or is bullying others then:

1. **Contact the class teacher immediately, so that the school's Anti-Bullying strategy can be implemented.**
2. Understand that your child may find it difficult to talk about what is worrying them, and be prepared to help or find out in other ways.
3. If your child does talk, listen and take the situation seriously.
4. Let your child know right away that you will do whatever is necessary to stop the bullying.
5. Be aware that your own reactions may get in the way of what is best for your child and act carefully and with advice where necessary.

Listening to children – some hints

- Attend to what is being said, without displaying shock or disbelief.
- Be patient; wait during any silences; prompt gently – “And?”.
- Accept what is being said (“believe” is too strong – keep an open mind if you can)
- Jot down brief notes of the details.
- Reassure your child that they were right to tell you.
- Reassure your child that it is not their fault that they are being bullied, and that it is vital that the situation is sorted out.
- Try to encourage your child to offer their own solutions to help themselves – this will help their morale and self-image.

Appendix D

Action Against Bullying
A Guide for Children

What should you do if you are being bullied, teased or picked on?

Remember:

- It's not your fault. Bullies have no right to do this. You are not to blame.
- Tell your teacher, a friend or another adult in school. If you don't tell someone, perhaps nobody else will either. Other people might be being bullied as well. Set a good example.
- Don't call the bully names, nor hit them. You might get into trouble yourself and make things worse. Tell the bully firmly that people are not for hurting, and then tell an adult about it.
- If someone is calling you names or making horrible comments, tell them firmly and calmly that what they are doing is very hurtful, and walk away. Then tell an adult about it.

What should you do if you see someone else being bullied?

- Take action!
- Tell a teacher or other adult straight away. If you watch and do nothing the bully will feel big and important.
- Don't be friendly to the bully just because you feel afraid.
- Bullies will stop if their bullying doesn't get them attention.
- If you see other pupils bullying, calling names or making horrible comments, tell them to stop and that people are not for hurting, and then tell an adult.
- Don't hurt the bully, but tell a teacher or other adult about the incident.
- Help the person who is being bullied by reassuring them, and helping them to feel it's not their fault.

**Help to stamp out bullying! Don't keep it
a secret.**

Bullying At School - don't suffer in silence.

If someone at school is **often** unkind to you, hurts you, or calls you names and teases you, or leaves you out of everything, and you are frightened

then

be firm and clear - look at them and tell them to stop, get away from them,
tell an adult.

Don't fight back, that can make it worse.

Bullying Out Of School - don't suffer in silence.

If someone out of school is **often** unkind to you, Either face to face or through electronic means - such as emails or text messages- and you are frightened

then

the way to stop them is to **tell an adult.**

Don't send messages back, that can make it worse.