

St Joseph's RC Primary School

Anti-Bullying Policy



Review Date: February 2023

Next Review Date: February 2024

Anti-Bullying Policy



Rationale

St Joseph's RC Primary School is committed to preventing all types of bullying. It is entirely contrary to the values and ethos of our school. All members of the school community have the right to be educated in a safe and secure environment. Everyone will be vigilant and will intervene promptly if there are any signs or reports of bullying. All staff will work to ensure that bullying is not prevalent in the school community by implementing preventative strategies involving staff, parents and children and also the wider school community. We have a responsibility to safeguard all pupils. The aim of this document is to ensure a unified approach is practised across our school when dealing with bullying and also to ensure consistency across all key phases with a wider purpose to enable children to thrive and strive in a positive and safe learning environment.

Purpose

Our policy sets out the rights of all stakeholders in relation to bullying. It contains definitions of bullying and signs and signals for staff, children and other stakeholders to be vigilant of the signs that may indicate that a person has been, or is being bullied. It also contains information on how to communicate concerns, procedures to deal with allegations and proactive and reactive strategies to combat bullying. Our policy takes into consideration consultation with stakeholders, as well as guidance that exists, data available and training undertaken. The policy will be subject to regular review to ensure it conforms to the latest guidance. It reflects current practice within school. The implementation of the policy is the responsibility of all staff and stakeholders.

Statement of Intent

We believe it is important that:

At St Joseph's we want children to learn in a supportive, caring and safe environment without fear of being bullied. Bullying is anti-social behaviour and will not be tolerated.

- All children feel safe whilst learning to work, play with and relate to others
- All children are treated fairly, with respect and dignity.
- We listen carefully to what all children have to say.
- We treat reports from all children seriously and take prompt, appropriate action.
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We ensure all children know that what they say will always be listened to and taken seriously.

This school believes that:

- Bullying is undesirable and unacceptable.
- Bullying is a problem to which solutions can be found.
- Seeking help and openness are regarded as signs of strength not weakness.

- All members of the school community will be listened to and taken seriously.
- Everyone has the right to work and learn in an atmosphere that is free from fear.
- All of us have a responsibility to ensure that we do not abuse or bully others.
- Young people should talk to an adult if they are worried about bullying and have a right to expect that their concerns will be listened to and treated seriously.
- Young people should be involved in decision making about matters that concern them.
- We all have a duty to work together to protect vulnerable individuals from bullying and other forms of abuse

Definition of bullying:

"Bullying is behaviour by an individual or group, repeated over time, that intentionally hurts another individual or group, either physically or emotionally. Bullying can take many forms (for instance, cyber-bullying via text messages, social media or gaming, which can include the use of images and video) and is often motivated by prejudice against particular groups, for example on grounds of race, religion, gender, sexual orientation, special educational needs or disabilities, or because a child is adopted, in care or has caring responsibilities. It might be motivated by actual differences between children, or perceived differences." (DfE Preventing and Tackling Bullying July 2017).

Anyone can practice bullying behaviours/be a bully.

- Bullying can take place between pupils, between pupils and staff, or between staff; by individuals or groups; face to face, indirectly or using a range of cyber bullying methods. It can happen in isolation or quite often in the presence of others.
- Some people know that they are bullying others and they mean to bully, i.e. there is intent. However, some people bully others without recognising the impact of their actions. Similarly, a victim of bullying might not recognise what is happening to them and that bullying behaviour has a very insidious effect that affects a person's self-esteem, confidence and well-being.
- A one-off incident tends not to comprise bullying. A characteristic of bullying is that in its different forms/behaviours it happens repeatedly over a period of time. However, individual incidents will be monitored to ensure that they are not repeated, as if undealt with these can become bullying over time.

Characteristics of bullying can include:

- **Repetitive and persistent.** Bullying is usually experienced as part of a continuous pattern and it can be extremely threatening and intimidating even when very subtle. Nevertheless, sometimes a single incident can have precisely the same impact as persistent behaviour over time.
- **Intentionally harmful.** The act of bullying intends harm to another individual although occasionally the distress it causes is not consciously intended by all of those who are present.
- **Involves an imbalance of power.** Bullying leaves someone feeling helpless to prevent it or put a stop to it. In some cases an imbalance of power may mean

that bullying crosses the threshold into abuse requiring implementation of safeguarding procedures.

We recognise that there are levels of bullying. It can take many forms, but the main types are:

- **Physical** - for example, hitting, kicking, theft
- **Verbal** - for example, racist, sexist or homophobic remarks, threats, name-calling
- **Emotional** - for example, isolating an individual from the activities and social acceptance of their peer group
- **Cyber** - mobile phone calls, text messages, pictures or video clips, emails, chat rooms, instant messaging, social networking websites.
- **Homophobic bullying** - for example, prejudice motivated towards students who are LGBT lesbian, gay, bisexual or transgender.

Child on child abuse: Context and Definition: Peer abuse is behaviour by an individual or group, intending to physically, sexually or emotionally hurt others. All staff should recognise that children are capable of abusing their peers. All staff should be aware of safeguarding issues from peer abuse including:

- bullying (including cyberbullying)
- physical abuse such as hitting, kicking, shaking, biting, hair pulling, or otherwise causing physical harm
- sexual violence and sexual harassment
- sexting (also known as youth produced sexual imagery); and
- initiation/hazing type violence and rituals

This abuse can:

- Be motivated by perceived differences e.g. on grounds of race, religion, gender, sexual orientation, disability or other differences
- Result in significant, long lasting and traumatic isolation, intimidation or violence to the victim; vulnerable adults are at particular risk of harm

Children or young people who harm others may have additional or complex needs e.g.:

- Significant disruption in their own lives
- Exposure to domestic abuse or witnessing, suffering abuse or experiencing violence at home
- Educational under-achievement
- Involved in crime

It can also be because:

- They don't know how to manage their own thoughts and feelings (e.g. they often hit and hurt others)
- They have been bullied or hurt by other people themselves
- They are scared of being hurt by other people
- They are jealous of other people

- They feel like they are not good enough
- They have negative beliefs about people who are different
- They are overcome by stress or pressure

Bullying is NEVER acceptable but understanding what has led to a person harming another person could help to prevent re-occurrence of bullying incidents.

Stopping violence and ensuring immediate physical safety is the first priority of any education setting, but emotional bullying can sometimes be more damaging than physical. School staff, alongside the Designated Safeguarding Lead and/or Deputy DSLs, have to make their own judgements about each specific case and should use this policy guidance to help.

Examples of Bullying

Racist bullying - an incident which is perceived to be racist by the victim or any other person. This can be in the form of:

- verbal abuse, name calling, racist jokes, offensive mimicry
- physical threats or attacks
- wearing of provocative badges or insignia
- bringing racist leaflets, comics or magazines
- inciting others to behave in a racist way
- racist graffiti or other written insults, even against food, music, dress or customs
- refusing to co-operate in work or play.

Emotional Bullying -

- repeatedly leaving individuals isolated from activities
- ignore, name call, be-little or put down, threaten, torment, humiliate and gang up on others.

Sexual bullying - this is generally characterised by:

- abusive name calling
- looks and comments about appearance, attractiveness, emerging puberty
- inappropriate and uninvited touching
- sexual innuendos and propositions
- pornographic material, graffiti with sexual content
- in it's most extreme form, sexual assault or rape.
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Sexual orientation - this can happen even if the pupils are not lesbian, gay or bisexual. Just being different can be enough. This can be in the form of:

- use of homophobic language
- looks and comments about sexual orientation or appearance.

SEN or disability - These pupils are often at greater risk of bullying. This can be characterised by:

- name calling
- comments on appearance
- comments with regard to perceived ability and achievement levels.
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The need for adult sensitivity should be taken into account in a number of instances, e.g. when grouping children, marking children's work, sharing of results and assessment arrangements as well as an awareness of appropriate language being used when addressing pupils.

Text Bullying - Pupils receiving threatening or disturbing messages from possibly anonymous callers. (Mobile Phones are allowed to be brought into school by children in Years 5 and 6 but must not be used in school and must be kept by the teacher in each classroom. Failure to follow these rules will result in a child not being able to bring their phone to school). It is likely that most children will be using mobile phones out of school.

Cyber Bullying - Children receiving abusive messages or images via email or social networking sites. Within school children have restricted access to both of these, but could be using inappropriate social media sites and unsafe use of gaming platforms outside school and at home. Parents/ carers are responsible in the first instance for their child's phone-use safety outside of school. We work closely with families to support them with this fast-moving technology.

Indirect - spreading nasty stories about someone, exclusion from social groups, being made the subject of malicious rumours, text messages, emails and cyber-bullying. This type of bullying is usually part of a pattern of behaviour rather than an isolated incident.

If an individual considers themselves to have been bullied, this may have a negative impact on their emotional well-being, which can perpetuate the fear of a further perceived or real incident and thus will need to be dealt with appropriately.

It is also important to remember:

- Bullying is an abuse of power.
- Bullying can affect all relationships: adult to adult, pupil to adult, pupil to pupil, and adult to pupil.
- Adults in schools can bully by means of sarcasm, putdowns, making comparisons and name calling to maintain control of a class.

Online and face-to-face bullying can happen simultaneously, so it is important to ensure that the range of possible contexts are fully explored in order to keep children safe.

Responsibility

Keeping Children Safe in Education (KCSIE), 2022 states that 'Governing bodies should ensure their child protection policy includes procedures to minimise the risk of peer on peer abuse and sets out how allegations of peer on peer abuse will be investigated and dealt

with'. It also emphasises that the voice of the child must be heard. 'Governing bodies, proprietors and school or college leaders should ensure the child's wishes and feelings are taken into account when determining what action to take and what services to provide. Systems should be in place for children to express their views and give feedback. Ultimately, all system and processes should operate with the best interests of the child at their heart' Child on child abuse is referenced in the Safeguarding and Child Protection Policy. The sensitive nature and specific issues involved with child on child necessitate separate policy guidance. Child on Child Abuse Policy and Procedural Guidance dealt with immediately and consistently to reduce the extent of harm to the young person, with full consideration to the impact on that individual child's emotional and mental health and well-being.

Equal Opportunities

Every member of the school community is entitled to expect equality of protection from bullying as well as protection and support from school policies and procedures designed to ensure that the school remains a safe environment in which to teach, learn and thrive.

As a school, we work together and strive to eliminate discrimination, harassment, victimisation and any other conduct that is prohibited by or under the Equality Act 2010.

This also includes promoting equality for people with 'protected characteristics'. The 'protected characteristics' the Act covers as discrimination are based on: age, disability, gender reassignment, marriage and civil partnership, pregnancy and maternity, race, religion or belief, sex and sexual orientation.

It is really important that all children gain an understanding of the world they are growing up in, and learn how to live alongside, and show respect for, a diverse range of people.

The Signs of Bullying

There is no definitive way of identifying that a person is being bullied. Staff should therefore be vigilant in order to identify any of these physical and/or behavioural changes in a person as soon as possible. The following physical and behavioural signs have been identified as possible indicators that bullying has/ or is taking place:

- Significant changes in normal behaviour or attitude
- Appearing upset
- Being withdrawn/ low mood
- Appearing frightened or subdued, possibly in the presence of particular people
- Flinching at actual or anticipated physical contact
- Asking not to be hurt
- Refusal to eat
- Refusal to participate
- Unwillingness to travel on public transport
- Not wanting to go to a certain venue
- Starting to bully others
- Incontinence
- Vomiting
- Unexplained illness
- Claims of feeling unwell with no apparent signs or symptoms
- Bruising or other physical marks
- Torn clothing

- Unexplained loss of money or possessions
 - Sleepless nights
 - Repeating words the perpetrator has said to them, e.g. "shut up or I'll hit you".
- We also recognise the role of children, staff and other stakeholders in reporting incidents and not taking on a role of bystander if they witness an incident of bullying. We aim to promote a positive, caring ethos within our school.
- Victims are more likely to have the following vulnerability characteristics:
- Lack of assertiveness, anxious or fearful and unlikely to fight back
 - Solitary children with few friends
 - Children with Special Educational Needs or Disabilities
 - Appearance
 - Ability
 - Health issues, including mental health
 - Home circumstances
 - Social class
 - Ethnicity
 - Gypsy/Roma and Traveller Children
 - Children in Care
 - Lesbian/Gay/Bisexual or Transgender/ non-binary/ children
 - Young Careers

Dealing with Bullying

We encourage children to report any incidents of bullying to any member of staff in the setting. We strive to create an environment where all students can discuss any concerns with staff and feel listened to and supported. Staff will deal with the incident as promptly and sensitively as possible. The following list of actions might be used by staff depending on the perceived seriousness of the incident:

Staff to record all incidents on the individual Incident Log (see appendix)

- Meet with the victim and remain calm, using patience and understanding.
- Encourage to talk about incidents, issues and feelings.
- Try to establish what type of bullying is taking place and where, how often the bullying is occurring.
- Identify the alleged bully/bullies. Obtain witnesses if possible.
- Advise the victim not to hit out at the bully or bullies as they themselves may end up being accused of bullying.
- Discuss options to resolve the situation, agree actions advise the victim of what happens next.
- Meet with the child/ren alleged to have been involved in bullying behaviour and encourage them to talk about reported incidents. Listen carefully to their perception of the incidents, accurately recording their words.
- If bullying behaviour has taken place explain that it is totally unacceptable and encourage child to acknowledge that the behaviour is wrong and needs to stop.
- Arrange a programme of support for both children where appropriate, including exploring motives or reasons for the behaviour and to ensure that there is no reoccurrence. Mediation will be used between culprit(s) and victim(s) where appropriate to support the right choices being made and good friendships rather than retaliation and to ensure that the victim's voice is heard. However, in serious cases this may not be suitable.

- The key phase leader will ensure that parents are informed of the incident on the day it has happened. Children will be offered the opportunity of having their parents involved to support the process throughout.
- Should any incidents of bullying behaviour be deemed of a particularly serious nature the Head will inform parents immediately of the possibility of exclusion.
- The Head may take the decision to exclude a child immediately for serious bullying behaviour. Parents have a right of appeal to the Governing Body and the LA.
- Inform the relevant staff in the appropriate phase (eg lunchtime organisers and other relevant staff who work with both victim or culprit).
- Complete a log on cpmops
- Arrange to meet the parents/carers of all of those involved in the incident(s) and any subsequent follow up meetings. Discuss relevant documentation and resulting action with parents/carers and what they can do to reinforce and support the school action.
- Think ahead about supporting both victim and bully and make regular checks to ensure the bullying has ceased.
- Any bullying incidents that occur are reported to the Governing Body on a termly basis through the Headteacher's report.

The types, rates and patterns of bullying, and the effectiveness of the school's actions to prevent forms of bullying, including cyber-bullying and prejudice-based bullying related to SEN, sexual orientation, sex, race, religion or belief, gender reassignment or disability are taken into account.

In order to support all pupils within the school, we focus on each individual. Evidence of this is recorded as appropriate through different methods, which can involve regular tracking and monitoring of absence and attendance rates, Team around the Child/ Family, Early Help meetings, pupil's voice and other plus targeted support for students.

We are aware that the school has a responsibility to safeguard children outside school and it is our responsibility to safeguard and take action, providing evidence that we have done so. We teach our pupils about staying safe online and internet safety and the consequences of inappropriate actions.

Confidentiality

School staff cannot promise absolute confidentiality if approached by a pupil for help. Staff must make this clear to pupils. Child protection procedures must be followed when any disclosures are made. It is very rare for a pupil to request absolute confidentiality. If they do, in situations other than those involving child protection issues, staff must make a careful judgement whether or not a third party needs to be informed.

This judgement will be based upon:

- The seriousness of the situation and the degree of harm that the pupil may be experiencing.
- The pupil's age, maturity and competence to make their own decisions.

Where it is clear that a pupil would benefit from the involvement of a third party, staff should seek consent of the pupil to do so. If appropriate, staff might inform the third party together with the pupil. Unless clearly inappropriate, pupils will always be encouraged to talk to their parent/ carer. An underlying principle in supporting pupils in our school is that all children are listened to sensitively and objectively, and all incidences of bullying will be taken seriously.

Prevention

The Culture: Strategies to prevent bullying behaviour include:

- Belief that bullying does happen, whether we know about it or not.
- Careful implementation of the Behaviour and Safeguarding policies, Equality and Public Sector Equality Duty, SEND, and PSHE Policies, in addition to this policy.
- The encouragement and development of good relationships between children and between staff and children.
- The use of collective worship and circle time to explore those relationships, areas of conflict, feelings, ideas and opinions.
- Actively encouraging children to seek support with any problems and giving them time and privacy to share any concerns.
- Working with children to help them grow in understanding of the consequences of their actions.
- Working with other agencies - e.g. other schools, Behaviour Support Services, Educational/clinical psychologists, CAMHS, Social Services, services for minority or vulnerable groups, commissioned work such as global policing education and interventions, play therapy, brain training and counselling.
- All staff who work with children to have appropriate training and a clear understanding of the school's approach to behaviour management and tackling bullying.
- Regular staff monitoring of behaviour during lesson time, at break time and lunch time.

The Curriculum: learning about healthy relationships, how to stay safe, the rights of the child.

We ensure that in all aspects of school life there is an emphasis on the importance of relationships, emotional well-being and a community ethos. Proactive strategies for the school can involve:

- PSHE, RE and RSE lessons support students in understanding what bullying is and how to combat it, encouraging students to problem solve. Through SMSC, children are encouraged to talk about their feelings and things that are worrying them.
- Educating children in an age-appropriate way, to understand and be respectful to people who may be different to them, including those with 'protected characteristics'.
- Involving parents and professionals in being proactive.
- Any child considered to be at risk is supported individually eg counselling, and the class teacher and child work towards a resolution.
- Bullying is talked about openly.
- Fact and fiction books on bullying raise awareness and deepen understanding.
- Problem solving activities are employed effectively in many areas of the curriculum and children work together.
- Regular assemblies to promote anti-bullying.
- Planned activities and events for national Anti-Bullying week each November.
- Useful information and displays in school to promote anti-bullying placed at child-friendly heights.
- Mentors used as a voice of the child.

Furthermore, RHE will tackle, in an age-appropriate way, issues which are set out in Keeping Children Safe in Education September 2022, such as:

- healthy and respectful relationships
- boundaries and consent

- stereotyping, prejudice and equality
- body confidence and self-esteem
- how to recognise an abusive relationship, including coercive and controlling behaviour
- the concepts of, and laws relating to – sexual consent, sexual exploitation, abuse, grooming, coercion, harassment, rape, domestic abuse, so called 'honour'-based violence such as forced marriage and Female Genital Mutilation (FGM), and how to access support, and
- what constitutes sexual harassment and sexual violence and why these are always unacceptable

Staff Code of Conduct (Staff Responsibility)

We recognise that all adults in the school are in effect role models for the students. The way in which we behave towards each other and to students is particularly important in terms of providing positive role models. Therefore, as adults we must:

- show respect for every child and other colleagues within the school community as individuals
- be aware of vulnerable pupils
- criticise the behaviour rather than the child
- avoid favouritism
- be seen to be fair
- avoid labelling
- have high expectations of pupils
- never give children ammunition to use against each other
- actively seek to develop a praise culture within the school.

Supervision

We ensure that key areas of the school are adequately supervised and staff are vigilant. Children are given opportunities to take responsibilities and demonstrate initiative (restorative champions, prefects).

Children's responsibility

Children also have a responsibility to role model appropriate behaviour for their peers. We therefore believe that all pupils must:

- show respect for their fellow students and adults working within the school community;
- support and be sensitive to others when they may be feeling vulnerable;
- actively seek to develop a praise culture within the school;
- actively support the school anti-bullying policy;
- take responsibility for their own behaviour.

Training

We, as a school, recognise and ensure that staff and Governors receive the latest appropriate training and guidance on behaviour and anti-bullying legislation, responsibilities and strategies. To ensure all governors, parents, pupils, teaching and non-teaching staff have seen and had the opportunity to discuss the policy.

- To ensure all staff are familiar with reporting incidents procedures and a summative record sent to the LA where appropriate and Governors.
- To ensure all incidents of bullying are recorded.
- To ensure every pupil receives regular Circle Time opportunities.
- To train pupils to use pupil mentors and peer mediators at playtimes.
- To improve the behaviour of all children in school.

Communication

We, as a school, are aware of the need for open communication between stakeholders. All sections of the school organisation must understand its role and responsibilities. We understand the need to ensure this policy is a living document, known and understood by all. Parents/carers are made aware of the school's policy at the induction meeting and through documentation, including this Policy and supporting leaflets that are available on the website and displayed appropriately within the school for all stakeholders. Regular bulletins about what bullying is, how to communicate with staff, recognising early intervention is crucial. Parents know that the school acts to prevent bullying and not just deal with bullying incidents. The views of parents, carers and other stakeholders are regularly recorded and taken into consideration in the rollout of school strategies. Children and families who are new to the school, are reassured that bullying is not permitted and it is a warning to potential bullies that such behaviour is unacceptable from the outset. Our staff do not wait for bullying to be proved before it is acted against. A positive, caring ethos demands a Prevention of Bullying Policy in operation throughout the school.

Hate Crime

A hate crime is any incident that constitutes a criminal offence that is perceived by the victim, or any other person, as being motivated by prejudice or hate. It could involve physical attack, threat of attack or verbal abuse or insult around issues such as race, faith, homophobia, transphobia or disability. A hate incident may or may not constitute a criminal offence but is perceived by the victim, or any other person as being motivated by prejudice or hate. If an incident appears to be a hate crime or incident, we as a school recognise the need for this to be reported to the police if appropriate.

Our anti bullying policy promotes the schools mission so that every child feels that they are welcomed content and secure so that they can thrive to be the best that they can be.

Review

Reviewed: 06 February 2023

Next review date: February 2024

This policy will be reviewed annually and enforced in a positive manner.