

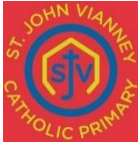
Anti-Bullying Policy

Written by: Head Teacher and Senior Leadership Team

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Approved by Governors: January 2021

To be reviewed: February 2024



St John Vianney Catholic Primary School



Anti-Bullying Policy and Guidelines

Introduction

St John Vianney Catholic Primary School aims:

To provide an enjoyable, caring, safe and supportive environment in which moral values and positive attitudes to learning are central to the Catholic ethos of the school, grounded in the Gospel Values.

To value all members of the school community, promote equality of opportunity and access to the curriculum for all pupils, developing the skills and attitudes necessary for pupils to take responsibility for their own learning and behaviour.

To provide a foundation for life in the school and the wider community by promoting the spiritual, moral, social and cultural development of the pupils, enabling them to become good citizens.

We have high expectations for our pupils' behaviour and conduct. We teach and promote the following positive moral and social values:

- Taking responsibility for your own behaviour.
- The ability to make choices about our behaviours.
- Being honest and telling the truth.
- Having mutual respect and being polite to one another.
- Caring for others.
- Caring for the environment and the school building.
- Trying to do our best.
- Valuing other's people's efforts.
- Accepting and recognising individual differences.

Bullying of any kind is against all that we teach and this policy sets out guidelines and advice to ensure that the whole school staff, pupils and parents in partnership, take steps to ensure that bullying does not occur in our school or beyond the school grounds.

Aims of this policy

St John Vianney Catholic Primary School seeks to provide a safe, secure and positive environment where:

- Children and young people can achieve their potential, making full use of the opportunities available to them.
- Children and young people involved have the right to have themselves and their property treated with respect and to be free from intimidation.

St John Vianney Catholic Primary School seeks to protect these basic human rights by ensuring that those acting on their behalf:

- Are proactive in setting up a range of preventative measures.
- Actively listen to children, young people and, where appropriate, their parents or carers.

Consultation process

This policy was drawn up by the Head Teacher in consultation with the Senior Leadership Team, staff and governors and taking advice from the Local Authority designated Behaviour Hub School for Newcastle. The aims and advice have been shared and discussed widely with pupils and parents. The policy takes into account DfE recommendations, the Human Rights Act 2000 and section 89 of the Education and Inspections Act 2006. This document reflects the core values and aims of the school as expressed in the following policies:

- Behaviour
- Special Education Needs
- Equalities
- E-Safety

The policy will be revised in the light of up-to-date recommendations by the Head Teacher and the Senior Leadership Team, in consultation with the governing body. Revisions and changes will be shared with pupils and parents, where appropriate.

Definition and identification of bullying

Bullying may be defined as the abuse of power by an individual or group with the intent to cause distress to another individual or group. It is deliberately hurtful behaviour which may be physical, sexual, verbal or psychological in nature. **It is often repeated over a period of time** by those who wish to cause distress to others.

Bullying should always be taken seriously. All bullying is unacceptable.

Bullying does not only occur between children. The above definition can also be seen to characterise some relationships between adults or between adults and children.

In more serious instances where adults abuse their power over a child or a child abuses their power over another child, bullying may be viewed as child abuse and should be treated as such.

Bullying is deliberately hurtful. It typically has seven elements:

1. *an initial desire to hurt.*
2. *the desire is expressed in action.*
3. *someone is hurt either physically or emotionally.*
4. *there is an imbalance of power.*
5. *it is without justification.*
6. *it is typically repeated.*
7. *there is evident enjoyment by those who bully.*

Bullying can also stem from thoughtlessness, such as in name calling or stem from institutionalised attitudes, for example in relation to gender or race. This is also unacceptable.

Bullying can typically take these forms:

1. Physical bullying *hitting, kicking, taking belongings.*
2. Verbal bullying *name calling, insulting, making offensive remarks.*
3. Indirect bullying *spreading stories/rumours, exclusion from social groups.*
4. Cyber bullying *takes place using electronic communication.*

Name calling is the most common direct form; this might be based on ethnic origin, nationality or colour, sexual orientation, some form of disability or other individual characteristics.

The use of mobile phones to text insulting, obscene or threatening messages is both verbal and indirect bullying. The use of phones and social media including camera phones to harass or transmit derogatory text messages and or photographs must also be viewed as bullying.

When responding to cyberbullying concerns, the school will:

- Act as soon as an incident has been reported or identified.
- Provide appropriate support for the person who has been cyberbullied and work with the person who has carried out the bullying to ensure that it does not happen again.
- Encourage the person being bullied to keep any evidence (screenshots) of the bullying activity to assist any investigation.
- Take all available steps where possible to identify the person responsible. This may include:
 - looking at use of the school systems;
 - identifying and interviewing possible witnesses;
 - contacting the service provider and the police, if necessary.

Bullying is always significant to the person being bullied. Each case will be different and the bully must be held accountable for their actions, as detailed in the school's Behaviour Policy.

Bullying by Race, Gender, Sexual Orientation or Disability

1. Racist Bullying

Following the Stephen Lawrence incident, the 1999 MacPherson report defines racist bullying as "any incident which is perceived to be racist by the victim or any other person" A child or young person may be targeted for being of a different group. Attacking the individual sends a message to that group. Incidents can include:

- Verbal abuse – name calling, racist jokes, offensive mockery / mimicry.
- Physical aggression or threats.
- Wearing offensive or provocative badges or other insignia.
- Bringing racist leaflets, comics or magazines into the school or organisation's premises.
- Inciting others to commit racist acts.
- Racist graffiti or other written insults including against food, music, dress or customs.
- A refusal to associate with someone of other ethnic origin in work or play.

2. Sexual Bullying

Sexual bullying is characterised by the following:

- Abusive name calling.
- Looks and comments about appearance, attractiveness, emerging puberty.
- Inappropriate and uninvited touching.
- Sexual innuendoes and propositions.
- Pornographic material.
- Graffiti with sexual content.

In its most extreme form, sexual bullying takes the form of sexual assault or even rape. Under these circumstances police would normally be involved as these are criminal offences.

Sexual Orientation: Pupils do not have to be lesbian, gay or bi-sexual to experience this type of bullying. In most cases being different can be enough. (In a survey 82% of teachers in 300 secondary schools in London were aware of verbal incidents. Only 6% of these schools referred to this type of bullying within their policy). Factors hindering schools in challenging homophobic bullying include staff inexperience and parental disapproval.

For further information and guidance consult the DfES publication on homophobic bullying "Stand Up for Us"

3. Disabilities

Children and young people with special needs or disabilities are often at a great risk of being bullied, both directly and indirectly. The bullying is usually about their specific difficulties or their appearance. This is compounded by the fact that these children and young people may not be able to articulate their experiences.

Recognising Bullying

Research shows that 75% of bullying in primary schools takes place in the playground. In secondary schools it is also most likely outdoors but other hotspots in senior schools are classrooms, corridors and toilets, especially when supervision is minimal.

Both boys and girls can bully as individuals or as members of a group. Children who bully others come from any kind of social or cultural background. Adult bullying of children also occurs and is equally unacceptable.

Bullying always creates inequalities and is damaging to all those involved. The person being bullied, the person who bullies and those who witness or know about the bullying are all affected in some way. Those who bully can experience difficult and unhappy relationships with both peers and adults and frequently need help to overcome these difficulties. Research evidence has shown that those who bully are more likely to engage in anti-social activities and have a greater prevalence of poor mental health.

A child or young person could have experienced both being bullied and having bullied others. Bullying is not a natural part of growing up and should never be accepted as such.

Those who bully may show aggression through for example, poor control of impulsive actions, a positive view of violence or a desire to dominate. They may exhibit anxiety through for example low self-esteem or difficulties in making friends. They may be easily led in joining in bullying or in standing by whilst bullying takes place.

Those who bully may experience difficulty in admitting what they have done; be reluctant to admit that what they have done is wrong; suppress feelings of guilt; feel no remorse and repeat the hurtful action, especially if this goes unchallenged.

Those who are bullied may spend their lives in fear. They often feel isolated from their peers and feel that they have done something to attract the bullying. Any child or young person can be bullied.

Those who are being bullied may experience:

- Unhappiness;
- A sense of desolation and in some cases, desperation;
- Reduced self-esteem and self-worth;
- Poor academic performance;
- Exclusion from normal social experience;

- A strong desire to escape the situation which may result in absconding or truanting;
- A desire to self-harm or even to commit suicide.

Those who are being bullied may exhibit the following:

- Unwillingness to attend or participate in activities;
- Unwillingness to venture into some areas of a building;
- Fear of walking to school or of using public transport;
- Underachievement;
- Books or clothes destroyed;
- Possessions and money going missing;
- Signs of distress such as crying easily, lack of appetite
- Becoming withdrawn or disruptive and/or aggressive;
- Stammering;
- Stealing to pay the bully or replace missing possessions;
- A variety of physical symptoms including cuts, bruising, aches, pain, faints, headaches, stomach upsets, bedwetting, disrupted sleep patterns;
- A marked change in well-established patterns of behaviour.

Those who are bullied are often reluctant to say what is wrong or to seek help. We support all children who come forward to report bullying in school.

Strategies for dealing with bullying

Any incidents of bullying will be dealt with according to the school's Assertive Discipline and Positive Behaviour Management Policy.

The following strategies will be used to minimise bullying: -

- Pupils are regularly (Every half term) reminded of the children's peer-on-peer abuse policy which aims to highlight and illustrate what bullying looks like and who children can go to for help.
- Raise awareness through the curriculum to get pupils to talk about bullying in order for them to understand how abhorrent it is. i.e., Anti-bullying week, PSHE lessons using RSE & PSHCE materials.
- Have clear procedures for investigating incidents and make all staff aware of them.
- Give pupils messages about bullying via role-play, assembly stories, poems etc.
- Praise good behaviour in order to give pupils an incentive to play happily with each other.
- Where possible try to encourage pupils to play games with each other giving them a purpose and direction to their play.
- The 'School Buddies' eg, Rec/Y6 play an important role in breaking down barriers for children reporting instances of bullying, whilst stopping short of peer mentoring.
- The school fosters an ethos of openness and encourages pupils to report their concerns.
- Pupils and parents know that the school, whilst having no legal duty outside of the school precinct, will treat all reported instances of bullying on the journey to and from school with equal seriousness.
- All staff collate individual pupil information on our CPOMS system. This record includes information about bullying and is there to build up a picture of evidence so that bullying can be identified with immediacy.
- Formal recording of instances of bullying takes place through the CPOMS system. Cases of bullying are dealt with through the schools Assertive Discipline and Positive Behaviour Management policy procedure. Parents are notified and encouraged to work with school and their child to stop and change the behaviour.

- Through the school council, approachable staff, communication with parents and carers – all pupils have many different ways of informing staff about bullying. All pupils will be taken seriously and all issues however they are raised will be investigated and action taken.
- Pupils may be closely monitored and strategies such as using separate areas of the yard be put in place to prevent incidences of behaviour. This will be organised and monitored by a Senior Leader.
- The school seeks the views of all stakeholders to ensure that incidents of bullying are reported promptly and acted on. The school has well established information gathering procedures through the use of questionnaires, whole school pupil questionnaires and parent and carer questionnaires. These are normally carried out in October and February each year.

Where bullying has occurred, the school ensures that the instigator(s) understands that they are acting/have acted outside of the school's code of practice and against the school rules. It is essential they acknowledge the impact of their actions. The school will specify actions and stipulate the repercussions. Victims will be given opportunities to discuss the issues and where appropriate, follow up work with the School may be required. Parental engagement paramount in the process to ensure a clear understanding of the incidence/s and the sanctions. Examples of sanctions for engaging in bullying are: verbal warning; pupil moved away from the person being bullied; missing break time and/or lunch time; referred to a senior member of staff; excluded from class/isolation and exclusion. Please refer to the school's Assertive Discipline and Positive Behaviour Management policy.

Responsibilities for the prevention of cyber bullying including mobile phone texting/messaging

- Pupils will be advised on cyber bullying through curricular activities and external consultants.
- Pupils and staff are required to comply with the school's Acceptable Use policy and agreement.
- Parents/Carers are required to sign the school's Acceptable Use Agreement.
- Parents/Carers are encouraged to discuss cyber safety and bullying with their child to supplement learning.
- Parents/Carers are provided with information and advice on cyber bullying.

Behaviour Meetings with Parents

When a parent/carer reports an incident of poor behaviour or bullying the class teacher must respond as soon as possible. Whether the discussion is via telephone or in person the staff member must:

- Listen to the details given by the parent/carer.
- Make an informal written record of what is being reported if appropriate.
- Make a clear written record of the concern using CPOMS; this will include what has been reported, what the staff member will do e.g. investigate the incident, close monitor etc and will normally involve a review discussion with the parent/carer. **This 'check back' and follow up is essential in all dealings with parent issues as parents should be clear about what has been done, how the school has or is dealing with the issues and the success of the intervention.**
- Formal recording of behaviour reports should be recorded in the school's CPOMS system. Racist or homophobic incidences will be officially logged onto the CPOMS system, and reported to the full governing body, as part of the Head Teacher report.