

# *St. Joseph's R.C. Primary School*

## Anti-Bullying Policy



Policy Completed By: SMT

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## Our School Mission Statement

*At St. Joseph's School, we aim to grow and learn together within a loving and caring environment which reflects the Gospel values. We encourage all our children to reach their full potential in all aspects of their education.*

At St. Joseph's we believe that all pupils have a right to learn in a safe, caring and supportive environment. Our mission statement underpins all the policies, practices and values of our school. It is the foundation for our ethos and in preventing bullying. It ensures children know how to treat one another with respect and kindness. In this way, it is made clear that bullying is a form of anti-social behaviour; it is wrong and will not be tolerated.

This policy should be read alongside the school behaviour policy, e-safety and internet access policy.

### **What is bullying?**

Bullying is unwanted, aggressive behaviour among school aged children that involves a real or perceived power imbalance. The behaviour is repeated, or has the potential to be repeated, over time. Bullying includes actions such as making threats, spreading rumours, attacking someone physically or verbally, and excluding someone from a group on purpose.

Bullying can occur through several types of anti-social behaviour. It can be:

#### a) Physical:

A child can be physically harmed (pushed, punched, kicked, hit, spat at, etc).

#### b) Verbal/Non-Verbal:

This can take the form of nasty looks, or subtle, knowing looks passed around the class when a specific child is answering a question. It can take the form of name calling, sarcasm, teasing and spreading rumours. It may be directed towards gender, ethnic origin, physical/social disability, personality, and includes sexual/homophobic remarks and/or gestures. It could also be in the form of a threat.

#### c) Exclusion:

A child can be bullied simply by being excluded from discussions/activities.

#### d) Damage to Property or Theft:

Pupils may have their property damaged or stolen. Physical threats may be used by a bully in order that pupils hand over property to them.

#### e) Cyberbullying:

##### *What is cyberbullying?*

Cyberbullying is when an individual or a group of people use modern technological devices and communication tools to deliberately hurt, upset or intimidate someone. For example, sending unpleasant e-mails via laptops, untrue text messages via mobile phones and posting embarrassing images/videos on social networking sites such as Facebook. For the victim, cyberbullying can be abusive, causing distress, humiliation and embarrassment.

At St. Joseph's, we teach children that all our words, communications and actions should be polite and respectful, when talking to somebody face to face and when using messaging devices. We always treat others with respect and kindness in the way we want to be treated/spoken to.

*Refer to the e-safety policy (section 4.5 Cyberbullying) and Appendix 2 in this document for more information.*

## **What can children do if they are being bullied?**

*(This will be shared with the children during anti-bullying lessons as identified on the PSHE curriculum framework)*

Through curriculum topics, texts studied and when incidents occur, class teachers will discuss bullying and reinforce the following strategies:

- If somebody says or does anything unpleasant to you, deal with the situation safely:
  - Shout 'Stop!' or say you are going to tell a teacher/your parents and walk away
  - Be confident and assertive, try not to show you are upset/afraid – people who bully want others to be afraid of them
  - Tell a trusted adult immediately – do not delay!
- If you feel upset or worried about anything you see, hear or experience – even if you are unsure if it is wrong or not, tell an adult you trust. This could be your parents, your teacher, a teaching assistant, a lunchtime supervisor, a sports coach or a friend.
- Expect people to treat you and speak to you politely, respectfully and kindly. If they do not, then tell an adult you trust.
- Find an appropriate time to talk to an adult if you are worried about something. You could use phrases like, 'Miss, can I talk to you at break time?' or 'Mum/Dad, when you have finished working on the computer can I tell you something?'
- Ask a friend to come with you to tell an adult, if you need some support
- Tell the adult everything and take your time to explain all the details, especially everything the person who has treated you badly has said
- Be aware of bullying and its different forms. Remember...
  - Your silence is the bully's greatest weapon – tell a trusted adult straight away.
  - Bullying is wrong and nobody should ever be treated badly.
  - Never doubt yourself or whether you should tell an adult – bullies might say 'Nobody will believe you,' and they might even lie and tell an adult you treated them badly first. Be confident that you are doing the right thing and calmly explain the bully is telling lies.
  - Be confident in yourself and proud of who you are. It is good to be individual.
  - Fighting back may make things worse – it is best to tell a trusted adult.
  - If you feel vulnerable inside/outside of school, stay close to your friends for support.
  - People who treat others badly are often unhappy in some way. Telling an adult, means they can help the person who is bullying with their own problems.

## **What can children do if they suspect/know someone is being bullied?**

- Encourage the child being bullied to tell an adult they trust. This could be their parents, teacher, a teaching assistant, a lunchtime supervisor or a sports coach.
- Offer to accompany them when they tell an adult.
- Tell an adult you trust yourself on their behalf.
- Do not:
  - watch and do nothing – be a friend not a bystander!
  - be, or pretend to be, friends with a bully
  - be afraid the same will happen to you

## **Working in partnership to prevent and address bullying**

Parents, school staff, and other caring adults have a role to play in preventing bullying. Below are a few suggestions of how...

### Help your child understand bullying

Talk about what bullying is and how to deal with it safely. Tell children bullying is unacceptable. Make sure children know how to get help.

### Talk to your child

Take time each day to talk to your child. Ask him/her about school, their friends and what they did/learned?

### Encourage children to do what they enjoy

Taking part in a range of activities can develop children's confidence, help children make friends and protect them from bullying behaviour.

### Model how to treat others with kindness and respect

Children learn from adults' actions. By treating others with kindness and respect, parents show their children there is no place for bullying. Even if it seems like they are not paying attention, children are watching how adults manage stress and conflict, as well as how they treat/refer to their friends, colleagues, children's teachers and families.

### Communicate with your child's school promptly if...

- You notice your child displaying any unusual behaviour, e.g. not wanting to go to school or not completing their homework well, (refer to Appendix 1 for signs and symptoms).
- Your child reports any unpleasant incidents/comments s/he has experienced – if we know about bullying, we will deal with it. Remember to manage your own emotions - appear concerned, but calm and reassure your child you will speak to the school to solve the problem. Do not approach parents or children yourself and do not advise your child to 'fight back' – it can make matters worse. Reassure your child s/he has done the right thing by telling you and explain that bullying of any kind is very wrong. Remind your child that if anything worrying happens to them in school, they should report it to a member of staff immediately.
- You feel your child may be a victim of bullying behaviour. Your questions and concerns will be taken seriously and investigated.
- You think/know your child is involved in bullying.

## School Procedures for Dealing with Bullying

Firstly, we work hard to educate our children about the correct way to treat each other and to follow the Gospel values.

Secondly, as a staff body we:

- Exercise vigilance
- Get to know our children quickly
- Promote positive pupil relationships within classes and across the school

Thirdly, as a school we adopt a zero tolerance approach on all anti-social behaviour.

If a bullying incident takes place in school and it is witnessed or reported, the following will happen:

- A member of the SMT will be notified
- All children involved will be spoken to and the matter fully investigated – this can take time if children try to lie, withhold details or misrepresent the truth
- All relevant adults will be informed (parents and class teachers)
- Appropriate sanctions will be implemented (*in line with the school's behaviour policy*). These could include asking the bully to apologise, loss of playtime privileges and exclusion from school (fixed term or permanent)
- School records will be updated, including the school bullying record. The local authority will be informed in very serious cases of bullying via the 'SENTINEL' system held by the London Borough of Southwark.
- Management strategies will be implemented to prevent recurrence and to assist the children in moving forward...
  - Discussions with the SMT to:
    - ensure the children understand what was wrong, why and what the right way to behave/interact with others is
    - reassure the children of how the situation was reported and dealt with
    - know what to say when other friends ask what happened
    - decide what to do to put things right – treat others well, forgive and work together to begin to re-build positive relationships
- The pupils concerned will be monitored

If a bullying incident takes place outside school and it is witnessed or reported, the following will happen:

- A member of the SMT will be notified
- The child/children involved will be spoken to and the full details obtained
- Parents will be contacted and informed
- If another school or agency is involved, they will need to be informed. It will be agreed who is best placed to do this, e.g. school or parent. Other agencies may involve clubs (after school, sports or drama), churches and youth centres.
- The appropriate management of the situation will be discussed with all parties to safeguard the individual(s) concerned, e.g. removal of victim from clubs, barring of bully from clubs, continued monitoring, etc.

## Appendix 1

### **Possible signs and symptoms of a child who is upset, worried and potentially experiencing bullying.**

A child may...

- Be frightened to walk to or from school alone
- Not want to travel on public transport
- ask to be taken/driven to school
- change his/her usual routine
- be unwilling to go to school
- have poor attendance (increased absence)
- become withdrawn, anxious and/or lack confidence
- begin stammering in their speech
- self-harm
- cry themselves to sleep at night or experience nightmares
- feel ill in the morning
- begin to perform poorly in school work
- arrive home with torn/soiled clothing or damaged property, e.g. bags, books, etc
- report their possessions as damaged or "missing"
- ask for money or begin stealing money (if being forced by a bully)
- report dinner or other monies continually "lost"
- have unexplained scratches, cuts or bruises
- become aggressive, disruptive or unreasonable
- begin bullying other children or siblings
- display changes to their appetite
- be frightened to say what is wrong when asked
- give improbable excuses for any of the above when asked
- display a change in their attitude

These signs and behaviours could indicate other problems, but bullying should be considered as a possibility and should be investigated.

## Appendix 2

### CYBERBULLYING RULES

- Always respect others – question and check what you ‘say’ online and the images you send. Ask yourself, ‘Would I like these words/images sent about me?’
- Remember whatever you send can be made public very quickly and could stay online forever.
- Ask permission before using anybody’s image for a poster, flyer or use online – this includes other children and adults.
- Treat your password like your toothbrush – keep it to yourself.
- Only share personal details with people you know and trust, e.g. your mobile number and e-mail address. Never share your real name, age, DOB or home address with anyone online.
- Don’t retaliate or reply to unknown and unpleasant e-mails/messages.
- Block bullies – learn how to block or report someone who is behaving badly.
- Save the evidence – learn how to keep records of offending messages, pictures or online conversations.
- Make sure you tell:
  - an adult you trust – your parents/teachers (they can contact internet providers to report incidents, remove content and cancel accounts)
  - or call a helpline like ChildLine on 0800 1111 in confidence;
- Support others – if you think a friend is being bullied online or through electronic media, encourage them to tell an adult or tell an adult yourself
- Do not pass on violent or rude images/videos involving people or animals – consider the following...
  - You may find a video clip of somebody tripping over funny and it could be a recorded accident similar to those shown on the TV show ‘You’ve been framed’ **or** the person in the video could have been targeted and set up to trip on purpose – how would you feel if this was done to you or a member of your family?

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## Appendix 3

### Useful websites

<http://www.thinkuknow.co.uk/>

[www.internetmatters.org](http://www.internetmatters.org)