

**St. John's**  
SCHOOL



# **ANTI-BULLYING POLICY**

**DATE: June 2009**

**Those responsible:**

**Mrs F S Armour - Headteacher**

**Mr M Butler - Deputy Head**

**Mrs J Clegg - Senior Teacher (Pastoral & Discipline)**

**To be reviewed regularly**

## **ANTI-BULLYING POLICY**

Bullying of any form will not be tolerated in the school. It is recognised that bullying has a seriously adverse effect on the social and emotional wellbeing of individuals and on their educational achievements. Bullying is possibly present in all schools and we must acknowledge the need to ensure that its incidence in this school remains low and is contained and dealt with. This policy has regard to the guidance within 'Safe to Learn – Embedding anti-bullying work in schools' and is applicable to all pupils in the school, including those in the Early Years Foundation Stage.

### **AIMS/OBJECTIVE:**

Produce a safe environment that allows children to be free from bullying in any form;  
To provide opportunities for children to voice their fears and concerns.

### **DEFINITION:**

Bullying is the wilful, conscious desire on the part of an individual or group to hurt, threaten or frighten someone through sustained and ongoing intimidation.

### **Characteristics:**

- Bullying which involves the use of technology e.g. text, internet, social network sites, email etc. will not be tolerated
- It can be physical and/or verbal in nature and the effect of both can be equally damaging.
- It can range from horseplay to serious assault leading to physical, emotional or psychological damage.
- It may consist of a single incident or, more usually, may continue over a long period of time.
- It can be both direct or indirect : bullies may be either perpetrators or others who by their presence signal their support of the bully.
- Its seriousness is determined more by the distress suffered by the victim than by the intention of the bully.
- Bullying of individuals or groups for racial, religious, cultural, sexual, sexism, homophobic, disability or any other reason is not tolerated.

### **ADVICE AND GUIDANCE:**

There is evidence that bullies themselves have feelings of inadequacy generated by problems with friendships and a perceived lack of success in certain areas. They are often individuals who measure their personal success by their ability to control others through fear and/or ridicule. It should be recognised that, although our prime concern must be the welfare of the victim, the school also has a responsibility towards the bully.

As a staff we must be aware of the serious psychological damage bullying can cause and that there are laws which apply to harassment and threatening behaviour.

### **IT IS ESSENTIAL TO:**

- Take preventative action to diminish the incidence of bullying.
- Act promptly and sensitively in dealing with any incidents arising.

### **GUIDELINES FOR PUPILS:**

- Inform your Form teacher or any other teacher immediately when you know or suspect that someone is being bullied or in distress.
- Do not take part in bullying incidents yourself, even as an onlooker.
- Only accept as your friends those who do not bully others.
- Remember that if you are a victim of bullying you have a responsibility to yourself and others to report the incident. Do not suffer in silence.
- Be confident that the member of staff you approach will act promptly and sensitively on your behalf.

### **GUIDELINES FOR TEACHERS:**

- Ensure that all accessible areas of the school are patrolled effectively.
- Watch for early signs of distress in pupils including deterioration of work, spurious minor illnesses, erratic attendance, attention seeking behaviour, over sensitive reactions.
- When a pupil reports an incident of bullying, listen carefully and respond sensitively.
- Offer the victim immediate support and reassurance.
- Make the bully aware of the complaint and of the unacceptable nature of his or her behaviour explaining the possible consequences.
- The following steps should be taken –
  - i. The Form teacher should ensure that an accurate record of events is obtained from both the victim and the perpetrator.
  - ii. Parents should be informed of the incident and may be asked to come into school to discuss the matter with all concerned.
  - iii. Any information must be kept on file.
  - iv. Concerns can be raised at weekly staff meetings where children who are vulnerable or who give cause for concern.
  - v. Concerns can also be raised at weekly Form Tutor meetings.

### **GUIDELINES FOR PARENTS:**

- Watch for signs of distress in children including reluctance to attend school, complaints about minor illnesses, complaints about missing possessions, apparent isolation.
- Maintain regular contact with your child's Form teacher and keep him or her informed of any concerns.
- Encourage your child to talk to his or her Form teacher about any worries.
- If necessary, help the Form teacher in devising strategies that will provide support for your child both in and out of school.

### **DISCIPLINARY PROCEDURES:**

All procedures will be determined by the severity of any incident. A thorough investigation will be made.

The victim should always be supported and reassured and the perpetrator reprimanded with a warning that there must be no repetition. Counselling should be available for both. Details must be recorded and the parents of those involved informed.

Initially, instances of unkindness to other pupils will result in them being reprimanded by their form tutor who may decide that the instigator should be dealt with by :

- being deprived of break or lunchtime play
- in the case of older pupils, being prevented from leaving school premises at lunchtime.
- after school detention
- a letter home
- parents called into school to discuss the incident

It will always be made clear to the perpetrator that unkind behaviour is not acceptable and the member of staff involved with disciplining the pupil should be satisfied that the pupil understands what they have done is wrong and is genuinely remorseful.

When pupils are involved in initiating or supporting repeated instances of bullying, punishment is likely to be either temporary or permanent exclusion from school. Staff who initially deal with such serious instances of bullying should always refer to the Senior Teacher in charge of Pastoral Care and Discipline or a Deputy Head.

### **PREVENTATIVE ACTION:**

1. **Awareness Raising** – in Personal and Social Education, through the Form time and through Assemblies issues relating to bullying can be raised. Continued consideration will be given to any opportunity that arises to promote the anti-bullying message in subjects like English, Drama, History and R.E..

2. **Staff Training** – Staff are encouraged to identify their training and development needs by the staff appraisal system, and with respect to this policy, staff will be given the opportunity to access further professional development opportunities.

### **3. Anti-bullying work through the curriculum**

The subject of bullying can be discussed and explored within the curriculum in a number of areas:

- Personal and Social Education
- Health Education
- Form Time
- Drama
- Literature
- RE
- Assembly

### **4. The Monitoring of potentially vulnerable pupils/groups of pupils.**

- Although not inevitably victims of bullying, it is important to recognize that the transition from KG to Junior and the move of a single pupil to a new school can be described as a ‘predictable crisis’, therefore, staff should be alert to the experiences of pupils in this situation. Equally, “vulnerability isn’t always visible to adults. The victim (of bullying) may look like any other child” and staff should be alert to the behaviour of ‘ordinary’ pupils as well as those who are different. It is important to recognize here that the ‘vulnerable’ pupil can also be the one exhibiting bullying behaviour.

- In the Lower School the Director of Studies (initially interviews any new pupil and following this, any concerns about vulnerability should be logged. New pupils continue to be monitored.
- Pupils who are visibly different – due to the nature of the school these pupils are known to staff and all staff are vigilant concerning these pupils. E.g. Tourettes syndrome children.
- Pupils in the transition stage between Year 2 and Year 3 – the nature of the school being on one campus allows for a smooth transition for most pupils. Form groups are small and allow for a small number of pupils to be known well by one member of staff and this allows for close monitoring of pupils at this stage. The House System allows for senior pupils to be known by junior pupils and vice versa.
- Pupils in the Kindergarten and Junior Department spend most of their time with their class teacher, who knows each child well and is aware of many aspects of life which could render a child vulnerable. Playground supervisors also play a large part in monitoring pupil behaviour and inform class teachers of any concerns there may be. There is close dialogue between all teachers, playground supervisors and the Headteacher regarding any pupils who give cause for concern.

## **5. Encouraging a ‘telling’ environment**

“Silence and secrecy nurture bullying”. Young people will not tell for a variety of reasons. Mainly they are worried about the subsequent reaction of the bully. They are naturally fearful of retribution and are also often confused in their attitude towards the bully, who can be a dynamic, fun and attractive classmate. Once pupils know that telling will result in a fair resolution they will trust adults with information about bad behaviour. It is important that the traditional “tale telling” myth is destroyed. A telling environment is one where all members recognize that they have responsibilities to the other members in the group and if they are aware of bullying they have a duty to tell. St John’s is committed to the development of a safe environment where pupils can ‘tell’ without fear of reprisal. A copy of the bullying poster must be displayed in each classroom.

## **Bullying**

### **Types of bullying behaviour**

This is by no means an endless list but these are examples of things that are bullying:

- Writing offensive things about someone using graffiti, notes, letters, text messages, email etc.
- Verbally abusing someone by name calling, making threats, using sarcasm etc.
- Physically hurting someone by pushing, shoving, tripping up etc
- Damaging personal property by tearing clothes, ripping books, hiding their things.
- Excluding someone by making sure they are isolated from their friends and peers.
- Trying to make others bully someone.
- Humiliating someone because they are seen to be 'different'.

### **What to do**

- If you are being bullied, tell someone. Don't suffer in silence.
- If you see someone being bullied, tell a teacher immediately.
- Don't think it's OK to be a 'bystander' – this can give the impression that bullying is an acceptable form of behaviour.