

ST PETER'S CATHOLIC PRIMARY SCHOOL



Anti Bullying Policy

MISSION STATEMENT:

Learning Together

Loving God

Becoming the best I can

St. Peter's Catholic Primary School are very aware of the possible consequences of bullying and through this policy and practice we strive to address the negative effect that such experiences may have on both pupils and staff within the school.

St Peter's School recognises that bullying is a serious issue. Respect for self and others as a part of God's creation is at the heart of our school ethos and everyone is responsible for ensuring the safety of everyone else in the school. We recognise the damage bullying can cause to the life of the victim, the bully and the school as a whole. We are committed to challenging the assumption that bullying is inevitable and are working towards stopping it completely.

Aims and objectives of the policy

- To raise awareness of bullying
- To bring about conditions in which bullying is less likely to happen in the future
- To ensure a whole school approach to bullying
- To reduce and, if possible, eradicate instances of all types of bullying

We believe it is important that:

- All children feel safe whilst learning to play with and relate to others
- All children are treated fairly, with respect and no loss of dignity.
- We listen carefully to what all children have to say
- We treat reports from all children seriously and take prompt, appropriate action

What Is Bullying?

Bullying is repeated action that is intended to cause someone else harm or upset.

It is different from one-off actions or flare ups which may happen spontaneously and even be seen by one person as a joke or something that got out of hand, although these incidents are also taken seriously because of their effect on the victim and because failure to act may lead to them being repeated.

Although there are a number of definitions of bullying, these definitions would include the following characteristics:

- It tends to be repetitive
- It involves an imbalance of power
- It may be verbal, physical or psychological

Bullying is an antisocial behaviour. We must respond in a way which will help the bullies improve their behaviour. Increasing their anxiety and alienation from us is not likely to work.

Signs and Symptoms of Bullying

Signs of bullying can be extremely variable and will very much depend on the individual. It is important, however, that parents/carers and school staff are aware of

the signs and symptoms associated with bullying so that they can identify possible problems. The more common signs include:

- Physical signs e.g. Physical injuries, damaged clothing with no convincing explanation and general ill-health due to stress
- Emotional signs e.g. mood swings, apparent changes in personality, constant anxiety/nervousness, depression or tearfulness for no apparent reason, lack of confidence, negative self-image, hostility and defensiveness
- Behavioural signs e.g. withdrawn, frequent, unexplained absences, poor concentration, eating disorders, evidence of self-harming and disruptive/challenging/bullying behaviour
- General e.g. frequently “lose” money/possessions, appears tired and lethargic, avoids entering/ leaving school with others.

It should be stated that usually victims of bullying become so through no fault or action of their own. However, on occasion, it is important to recognise that there can be different types of victims because they:

- Are new to the class
- Are different in appearance, speech or background from other people
- Suffer from low self-esteem (but this is not clear whether this is the cause or effect of bullying).

Why we respond to Bullying?

Bullying hurts. No one deserves to be a victim of bullying. Everybody has the right to be treated with respect. Pupils who are bullying need to learn different ways of behaving.

Our school recognises that bullying does exist at all levels - from nursery to college as well as in the workplace. Such behaviour may be exhibited by children from all social classes and backgrounds. All teachers and staff must be aware that not only will some children in our society be bullies, but it is possible for adult behaviour to reinforce bullying. Teachers and staff must be conscious that they do nothing to condone aggressive behaviour - they must not show it themselves or accept it in others.

Strategies in school to prevent bullying behaviour include:

- Careful implementation of the Behaviour, Racial Equality and Equal Opportunities and Citizenship Policies
- 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 as well as RE lessons
- 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. Educational Social Worker, Behaviour Support Services, Social Services, PSFA
- All staff who work with children to have appropriate training and a clear understanding of the school's approach to behaviour management
- Regular staff monitoring of behaviour at break time and lunch time

What should parents do if they think/feel/believe their child is being bullied?

Contact the school.

The first point of contact is the child's class teacher. It is important that parents feel confident to talk to staff about their concerns. The Head is actively involved in all such cases either through discussion with the children concerned or the class teacher and welcomes parents to share their concerns so that prompt action can be taken.

Good Practice for staff when working with parents

- Recognise that it is normal for parents to experience anger or feel upset
- Keep an open mind
- Remain calm and understanding
- Refrain from making instant decisions and explain clearly that it will take time to investigate
- Investigate incidents thoroughly before passing any judgement
- Reassure the parent that any incidents will be followed up promptly
- Make it clear that the school does care
- Agree a timescale to speak to the parent after investigations have been made
- Clearly explain school policy and procedure and ensure that it is followed
- Feedback promptly to the Head teacher
- Explain that discussions will relate to their child only and actions taken to address the situation relating to their child. It is not appropriate to discuss other children or any actions or sanctions put in place except to reassure parents that appropriate measures are in place to ensure the well-being of their child in school.

Prevention

The school is committed to stopping bullying altogether.

In order to do this the school will:

- Ensure whole-school and class rules reaffirm expected behaviour
- Take seriously and investigate all complaints from pupils, staff and parents where a child has been physically or emotionally harmed, even if these are one-off incidents
- Actively promote the school's Anti bullying policy and anti-bullying strategies
- Ensure that all parents have a copy of the Anti-Bullying Policy available to them.

- Provide appropriate agreed strategies for individual children who are victims or feeling bullied in any way; revisit and reinforce these strategies regularly.
- Promote a no-touch policy
- Promote a high level of vigilance from staff, pupils and parents
- Ensure sanctions are applied to punish inappropriate and hurtful behaviour
- Use assemblies and class discussions to discuss scenarios and feelings of both victims and bullies.

Reporting

The school is committed to removing the culture of secrecy from bullying. We recognise that many young people will be put off reporting because they fear that it will make matters worse.

In order to encourage pupils to report bullying the school will:

- Take each allegation of bullying seriously and investigate it, guaranteeing anonymity if appropriate.
- Carry out regular pupil surveys including through circle time/class councils allowing pupils to disclose if they or others are being bullied.
- Ensure pupils understand bullying is not acceptable and how bullies and victims will be treated.
- Provide an open door policy for parents who have concerns.
- Consult with pupils about the effectiveness of anti-bullying strategies and their ideas for improvement.

In order to ensure the accuracy of reporting written and/or verbal testimony will be taken from the victim, the perpetrator and any witnesses. These will be treated sensitively and kept confidential.

Recording

In order to monitor the frequency with which incidents of bullying take place the school will record each incident of bullying centrally

Victim Support

- Ensure the victim is happy with action taken
- Arrange an apology, written or verbal, from the perpetrator of the bullying.
- Discuss with the student what support they feel that they need.
- Discuss with the parent/s what support they feel their child needs.
- Make referrals to external agencies if necessary.

Support for the Bully

The school recognises that bullying can damage the life and education of the bully as well as the victim.

Students that bully will be offered a range of support. This will include one or more of the following:

- Discussion to find out why they are bullying
- Give them chance to make a fresh start in line with the Gospel values of our school
- Supervised break times.
- A Behaviour Action Plan.
- Discussion with parents
- A referral to an external agency.

Sanctions

It is important for the victim of bullying, the bully, and the school community as a whole that there are clearly defined consequences for any act of bullying. Each case will be dealt with individually, but the types of sanctions available to the school are:

- Withdrawal of break times and lunchtimes.
- Withdrawal of other privileges
- Fixed term exclusion.
- Permanent exclusion.

Communication

Whenever an allegation about bullying is made the parents, class teacher and Headteacher of both victim and bully will be informed.

ALLEGED/ACTUAL INCIDENT REPORT FORM

Date and time report made	
Report made by	
Report made to	
Description of incident as Reported including time, place, people involved, adults & pupils (continue overleaf if needed)	
Action taken immediately	
Action taken following investigation including any meetings held Others consulted if any, including outside agencies	
Follow up action taken	
Pupil signature to show understanding and agreement	