St Joseph's Catholic Primary School & Nursery

ANTI-BULLYING POLICY

(written in conjunction with Whole School Behaviour Policy)

Our family at St Joseph's Learns, Loves & Grows with God at the Centre

Reviewed and ratified by the Governing Body	Summer term 2022
Next Revision	Annually
To be reviewed	Summer Term 2023

‘Love one another as I have loved you’ John 13: 34

At St. Joseph’s we aim to promote values based on Christian morality as witnessed in the teachings of Christ through the Gospels and the teachings of the Catholic Church. We take a particularly serious view of bullying when it occurs in our school and always take firm action against it.

What do we do to prevent bullying in school?

An ongoing anti-bullying campaign is important if we are to prevent incidents of bullying occurring in school. Our Whole School Behaviour Policy states clearly the standards of behaviour that are acceptable at St. Joseph’s, the incentives we use to encourage children to maintain these standards and the procedures that are followed when these standards are not maintained.

We encourage all staff, teaching and non-teaching, to be observant and to watch closely for any signs that bullying is taking place in the classroom or on the playground, ensuring that children are supervised at all times.

We seek to promote positive values of care and respect for one another through our curriculum: for example the Religious Education Scheme, our school Personal, Social, Cultural and Health Education (PSCHE) and Citizenship Programme stress the importance of treating everyone we meet with love and understanding following the example of Christ; in Drama we use role-play to teach pupils how to challenge bullying behaviour and we can use Circle Time as an opportunity for pupils to share their experiences of and feelings about negative behaviours such as name calling.

We attempt to raise the awareness of all pupils in the school about acceptable and non-acceptable behaviours, especially bullying, through regular assemblies and by rewarding non-aggressive behaviour (e.g. Golden time, Praise Certificates) whenever possible. We encourage children to think about their role when an incident of bullying occurs and we stress the importance of telling an adult about all incidents of bullying. Guidance for pupils who are bullied is attached to this policy.

Research tells us that in primary schools up to three quarters of bullying behaviour takes place in the playground. We have made positive improvements to the organisation of play and lunch times e.g. improved supervision, raising the profile of mid-day supervisory staff, creating activity areas, etc.

Information about bullying

What is bullying?

Bullying is **deliberately** hurtful behaviour **repeated** over a period of time. Bullying can be physical (e.g. hitting, kicking, taking things), verbal (e.g. name calling, teasing) or emotional (e.g. ostracising, coercion), and can be carried out by one person or by a group of people.

Who are the victims?

Reasons for being a victim of bullying may be:

- race/sex/class
- new child in school
- child with family crisis
- disability or difference of any kind
- over protective family environment

Victims are more likely to be children who are not assertive, unlikely to fight back, loners with few friends, anxious or fearful children, younger children, and those outside a group. Some children who are bullied may be **"provocative victims",** i.e. a child who behaves inappropriately with others (e.g. being a nuisance, barging in on games).

Who is a bully?

Children who bully others can come from any kind of family, regardless of social class or cultural background and reasons for bullying can be:

- the bully is a victim of violence himself/herself
- the bully enjoys a sense of power
- the bully is copying behaviour at home or on T.V.
- because of peer group pressure

Early signs of distress

*withdrawn
*deterioration of work
*spurious illness
*isolation
*desire to remain with adults
*erratic attendance
*general unhappiness/anxiety/fear
*arriving late at school

What we do when bullying does occur.

We believe preventative action is highly effective in keeping the number of incidents of bullying in our school to a minimum. However, incidents of bullying occur in every school from time to time and it is necessary to have clear procedures for children, parents and staff to follow.

Step One: Investigation

The incident is investigated after a child has complained of bullying. This may mean that no direct action is taken immediately so that the situation can by closely observed and monitored (e.g. by the class teacher or mid-day supervisor) over a defined period of time.

Step Two: Interview

The bully/bullies and the victim are interviewed separately and their accounts are listened to carefully. Both the victim and the bully have the chance to speak about the incident and both need support – the victim's self-esteem and sense of self-worth may need reinforcing and the bully will need to identify why s/he has behaved in this way.

Step Three: Recording

The incident, those involved and their accounts during the interview are recorded

Step Four: Action

Appropriate action is decided upon and recorded. If it is appropriate to use sanctions then this will be in accordance with the sanctions laid out in the Behaviour Policy. It may be that the use of sanctions against the bully is inappropriate and that the use of incentives to encourage more positive behaviour on the part of the bully would be more effective (e.g. Home Link book, Contract, etc). Action may be needed also to support the victim.

Step Five: Follow Up

The situation will continue to be monitored and a follow up meeting with the victim and his/her parents will be held.

How we can help children who are bullied.

- Reassure them that the bullying is not their fault
- Explain that reacting to bullies by crying or becoming upset only encourages them. Victims should try not to react to their bullies' taunts
- Teach them some assertiveness techniques
- Encourage the victim to minimise opportunities for bullying – e.g. do not bring valuable possessions to school, stay away from the person who is bullying.
- Praise them well and publicly whenever they accomplish something
- Give them responsibilities – this helps to make them feel valued and important
- If the child is a 'provocative victim' (i.e. behaves inappropriately with other children) help them to learn new behaviours and develop their social skills.

What parents can do to help

- Support our policy by reinforcing the values we are trying to promote. Do not tell your child "Go and hit him/her back".
- Discourage your child from using bullying behaviour at home – show them how to resolve difficult situations without using violence and aggression
- Be aware of the signs of bullying and of any changes in your child's behaviour
- Help to build up your child's self-esteem with plenty of praise and affection
- If you think your child has been bullied make an appointment via the school office to see your child's class teacher – many incidents can be sorted out very quickly by the teacher. S/he will know what action should be taken and whether or not it is necessary to inform the Head Teacher.
- If you think your child is bullying others make an appointment via the school office to see your child's class teacher. Together you can decide how best to help your child.

What to do if you are being bullied.

When you are being bullied

- Be firm and clear – look them in the eye and tell them to stop
- Get away from the situation as quickly as possible
- Tell an adult what has happened straight away

After you have been bullied

- Tell a teacher or another adult in your school
- Tell your family
- If you are scared to tell a teacher or an adult on your own, take a friend with you
- Don't blame yourself for what has happened

Remember all of these things can be bullying –

* picking on someone
* teasing
* threatening
* spreading lies
* name calling
* hitting/kicking
* sending nasty notes/ cyber-bullying
* ignoring