



ANTI BULLYING POLICY ST JOHN'S PRIMARY SCHOOL

In considering this policy it should be noted that it will be applied equally to all pupils regardless of gender, race, religion, disability or socio-economic status.

AIM

To promote positive behaviour by declaring the unacceptability of bullying behaviour and determining specific strategies to ensure the health, safety and welfare of St John's pupils.

RATIONALE

Bullying behaviour is not tolerated in St John's.

“Every child and young person in Scotland will grow up free from bullying and will develop respectful, responsible and confident relationships with other children, young people and adults. Children and young people, and their parents or carers, will have the skills and resilience to prevent or respond to bullying. All children will expect help and know who can help them; while those adults working with them will follow a consistent and effective approach in dealing with and preventing bullying from early years onwards.”
(Scottish Government, 2010)

By identifying different types of bullying behaviour, staff will be able to create a safe and secure learning environment for all pupils. Moreover, staff adopt a more preventative approach by implementing our positive behaviour strategies. However, pupils who are involved in bullying behaviour will be made accountable for their actions and dealt with under the school disciplinary procedures.

As a “Rights Respecting School” we strongly respect the rights of all pupils

- A right to be educated
- A right to learn in safety and peace
- A right to be respected
- A right to be ourselves
- A right to come to school free from worries

DEFINITION OF BULLYING BEHAVIOUR

Sercombe and Donnelly (2013) discuss bullying behaviour as follows:
“Bullying is not about just any kind of injury, nor just any negative impact. It involves a particular kind of harm. It is aimed at engendering a kind of helplessness, an inability to act, to do anything. It is an assault on a person's agency...”

Falling in and out of friendships is a normal part of growing up; however, this is distinct from bullying behaviour which is never acceptable. Bullying behaviour can be expressed through physical, emotional, verbal or intimidatory behaviour or in the form of marginalisation. People can experience bullying behaviour on the grounds of age, race, gender, sexual orientation, disability, socioeconomic status, nationality, religion or other real or perceived difference.

Bullying behaviour can include:

- Being called names, teased, put down or threatened
- Being hit, tripped or kicked Having belongings stolen or damaged
- Being ignored, left out or having rumours spread about you
- Receiving abusive text messages or e-mails
- Being forced to do things against your will
- Being targeted for who you are or who you are perceived to be

Something need only happen once for a child or young person to feel worried or scared to go to school.

When talking about bullying behaviour, it is important not to label children and young people as 'bullies' or 'victims'. Labels can stick for life and can isolate a child, rather than helping them to recover or change their behaviour. All children and young people need help to understand why bullying behaviour is wrong in order that they can change it.

DEALING WITH INCIDENTS OF BULLYING BEHAVIOUR

In St John's Primary we work to create a positive and supportive ethos. There is a whole school approach in which children and adults work together to create an environment where bullying is not tolerated. This includes:

- Rights Respecting School programme
- School Vision, Values and Aims
- Restorative practices and approaches
- PSE programmes
- In-service training for staff
- 'Buddying' programme
- Peer Mediation
- Bounce Back resilience training
- Assembly programme which includes anti-bullying campaigns
- Encourage pupils to report incidents of bullying behaviour
- Identification and support for potentially vulnerable pupils eg Circle of Friends

St John's policy aims to encourage respect and responsibility towards others. It incorporates a positive behaviour programme, in which good behaviour is

recognised and rewarded. Teachers should use this programme to deter any type of bullying behaviour.

We aim to build a school community which reflects Gospel values. Our ethos allows staff to develop an atmosphere of trust and openness, which is used to encourage pupils to confide in a staff member if being bullied. Pupils should be aware that they will be listened to and supported.

PROCEDURES TO FOLLOW

The Equality Coordinator will be responsible for

- recording and overseeing the investigation of incidents of bullying behaviour
- embedding policies and practices in school
- ensuring that issues around bullying behaviour are explored in the curriculum, that all staff have an agreement of what constitutes bullying behaviour and how to respond to it
- ensuring anti-bullying approaches are regularly refreshed with staff and pupils

The member of staff to whom the incident is first reported, or who has witnessed the incident, should take the incident seriously. They must use their professional judgement in deciding upon appropriate action. Action will depend on the following factors:-

- Age of those involved
- Knowledge of individuals
- Level of distress caused
- Context of the incident

All reported incidents will be recorded and investigated timeously. The maximum time to carry out a full investigation should be **three** working days. If a delay is unavoidable, the individual who has made the allegation should be contacted by phone, letter or in person, told the matter is under investigation and that the school will be contacting the relevant parent/carer upon completion of the enquiry.

If the investigation necessitates action to be taken, the following steps will be followed:

- The incident will be recorded
- Make it clear the type of behaviour exhibited is totally unacceptable
- Work with the person showing bullying behaviour to make them aware of the impact of their actions on others
- Support the person showing bullying behaviour using **restorative practices** to improve their behaviour and prevent a recurrence

- Involve members of staff, including, if appropriate, staff in other agencies, who work with the young person experiencing bullying behaviour and the person showing bullying behaviour
- Inform parents/carers of the incident and any action taken, seeking to work in partnership
- Where a child or young person has reported the bullying behaviour, make sure they are informed of any action taken and the outcome of any investigation. Always take their views into account before taking action, including contacting parents
- Parents and children and young people should be informed if an investigation has concluded whether the behaviour is confirmed as bullying behaviour or not
- In extreme cases such as physical attacks and ongoing harassment, a young person showing bullying behaviour may be excluded from school
- In extreme cases, seek advice from the link QIO and consider notifying the Campus Police Officer

Sanctions and support are given to the young person showing bullying behaviour to ensure that procedures/interventions improve behaviour. A consistent approach is followed which is in line with restorative approaches. This may include pupils spending time reflecting, discussing, or completing restorative work, or working with a designated member of staff.

Support for the young person experiencing bullying behaviour is essential immediately following the incident and during an agreed period of review. This support would normally be provided by the class teacher, pastoral support teacher/Principal Teacher working in conjunction with relevant individuals/agencies (if required).

MONITORING AND EVALUATION OF POLICY

This policy will be reviewed on an annual basis.