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## *St. Joseph's Anti-Bullying Policy*

*Revised September 2023*

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This policy has been written by the school, building on national best practice, East Renfrewshire Council, Education Scotland and Scottish Government policy.



### **Convention on the Rights of the Child**

**Article 14:** Children have the right to think and believe what they want and to practise their religion, as long as they are not stopping other people from enjoying their rights.

**Article 19:** Children have the right to be protected from being hurt and mistreated, physically or mentally.

**Article 29:** Children's education should develop each child's personality, talents and abilities to the fullest. It should encourage children to respect others' human rights and their own and other cultures.

*Bullying is both behaviour and impact; the impact is on a person's capacity to feel in control of themselves. This is what we term as their sense of 'agency'. Bullying takes place in the context of relationships; it is behaviour that can make people feel hurt, threatened, frightened and left out. This behaviour happens face to face and online."*  
(respectme, 2015)

Bullying is a clear breach of the UN Convention on the Rights of the Child. As a Rights Respecting school, we at St. Joseph's are committed to challenging all types of prejudiced based bullying behaviours and language in line with the Equality Act (2010).

### **Rationale**

The school aims to deliver East Renfrewshire Education Department's vision of 'Everyone Attaining, Everyone Achieving through Excellent Experiences'. At St. Joseph's we are committed to eliminating all forms of bullying and to provide a safe, supportive environment for all, without fear of experiencing bullying behaviour. The policy outlined here reflects a clear commitment to promoting a respectful, equitable and inclusive culture and ethos.

### **Our Aims are:**

- To consistently and continuously convey the message that bullying is **NEVER** acceptable
- To embed an ethos of **anti-bullying** in day to day practices
- To ensure we **get it right for every child** (GIRFEC) and that all young people in our school are **Safe, Healthy, Achieving, Nurtured, Active, Respected, Responsible** and **Included**
- To promote positive relationships and behaviours amongst all children and young people and adults around them (Promoting Positive Behaviour Policy)
- To respect the **rights of children** as paramount Rights Respecting Schools Policy
- To address all aspects of **prejudice** in order to make sure all types of prejudice based bullying are treated with equal importance (including bullying based on the protected characteristics listed in the Equality Act 2010)
- To promote an ethos which celebrates **diversity**
- To promote an ethos of **inclusion** where positive behaviour and **respect** for others is promoted
- To promote a culture where **equality** and **fairness** are at the forefront of interactions between members of the school community
- To create an **open culture** where children confident in reporting incidents of bullying behaviour
- To develop **resilience**, enabling children to use have effective strategies in place to prevent and respond appropriately to bullying behaviour or harassment
- To ensure that adults and children understand what constitutes bullying behaviour
- To ensure that children who have been victims of bullying are appropriately **supported** and that their attainment and achievement is not impacted
- To ensure that children who demonstrate bullying type behaviours are **supported** in order to determine underlying reasons for behaviour and improve outcomes for all

### **What is Bullying Behaviour?**

At St. Joseph's we believe Bullying can be expressed through **physical, emotional, verbal** or **intimidating behaviour** or in the form of marginalisation. People can be on the receiving end of bullying behaviour for a number of reasons including: **age, race,**

**gender, sexual orientation, disability, socio-economic status, nationality or religion.**

Bullying behaviour can include:

- Being called names, being teased, being put down or threatened
- Being ignored, being 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

### **When is it not bullying behaviour?**

Children and young people falling out or having disagreements is a normal part of growing up and building relationships. Accidental bumps and knocks, not liking someone or expressing unpleasant thoughts or feelings regarding others can be painful or discomforting.

### **Social and Emotional HWB in St. Joseph's**

In St. Joseph's, children will have opportunities to discuss how they feel and to develop resilience and emotional literacy in managing their relationships through the Health and Wellbeing Curriculum (e.g.)

- 3 named people
- Circletime
- My world triangle - termly
- Resilience questionnaire - termly
- Mental Health HWB lessons
- Headteacher's comment box
- Daily Emotional check-in
- Restorative Practice

### **Social Media**

The popularity of mobile, internet and wireless technologies have provided increasing opportunities for 'cyberbullying'. In partnership with parents, it is the school's responsibility to ensure that pupils have a good knowledge of how to use their mobiles and the internet appropriately and safely. These skills will be taught explicitly through Digital Technology lessons and the Health and Wellbeing curriculum.

### **Roles and Responsibilities**

#### **The role of staff:**

- To provide an environment where all children feel safe, welcome and included
- To promote an ethos of inclusion, respect, fairness and equality

- To actively involve children in promoting positive behaviour through weekly achievement books and house point rewards.
- Ensure that cyber resilience and internet safety is central to all digital technology use
- To discuss and explore the effects of bullying behaviour through the Health and Wellbeing curriculum
- To be vigilant and look out for unusual behavioural trends
- To encourage pupils to report incidents of bullying behaviour against themselves or others
- To engage in restorative approaches to ensure that all children are treated fairly and equally
- To engage with effective learning and teaching resources in line with Respect for all (Scot Government <https://www2.gov.scot/Resource/0052/00527674.pdf>)

### The role of the pupils:

- To encourage one another to create an environment where bullying behaviour is **never tolerated**
- To ensure everyone feels **valued, respected and included**
- To promote **respect** in relation to the **rights** of others
- To **contribute** their views and through the Pupil Council and other pupil groups/committees
- To offer **peer support** and guidance through buddying or mentoring
- To participate in Anti-Bullying campaigns, posters and assemblies to raise awareness

### The role of parents:

- To support the school values of **tolerance, care, concern** and **respect** for self and others
- To foster an open pathway of **communication** between the school and home
- To raise awareness of the importance of encouraging a **positive** and **inclusive** ethos within the school and beyond
- To feel **supported** to contact the school if they have any concerns

### Responding to Allegations of Bullying Behaviour

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

The school will record all allegations of bullying behaviour, whether confirmed or not and conduct a full investigation. Where the investigation may take longer, a phone call will be made, explaining that the parent/carer will be contacted upon completion of the enquiry.

- A member of the Senior Management Team will monitor incidents recorded regularly to ensure patterns of behaviour are recognised and measures are put in place to respond appropriately.
- If the investigation confirms bullying behaviour the following steps should be followed:
  - Make it clear that the type of behaviour exhibited is totally unacceptable
  - Involve appropriate members of staff to work with the young person experiencing bullying behaviour
  - Work with the person exhibiting bullying behaviour to make them aware of the impact of their actions on others, and using restorative practice, support them to improve their behaviour and prevent a recurrence
  - Inform parents/carers of the incident and any action taken, seeking to work in effective partnership
  - support any child who has experienced bullying or engaged in bullying behaviours through appropriate means including wellbeing assessments and wellbeing plan if necessary
  - In extreme cases such as physical attacks or ongoing harassment, a young person showing bullying behaviour may be excluded from school
  - In extreme cases, advice of the link Quality Improvement Officer may be sought and police notified

### **Whole School Approaches to Dealing with Bullying Behaviour**

St. Joseph's addresses issues of relationships through our ethos of tolerance, respect and care of others. This is supported by:

- An understanding that children with additional support needs may experience bullying differently and support should be targeted appropriately
- Access to relevant training to ensure roles and responsibilities are clear and that strategies to deal with bullying behaviour are understood.
- Ongoing curricular focus on anti-bullying education
- Support from external agencies such as Educational Psychologist, Campus Police Officer etc.
- Pupils and staff awareness of their roles and responsibilities
- Participation in the Rights Respecting Schools initiative

