



St John Plessington
Catholic College

Anti-Bullying Policy 2019-20

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1. Introduction

The Anti-Bullying Policy aims to reflect the Catholic ethos of the school.

The policy is also in line with the school's behaviour policy, which promotes the responsibility of all adults in the school to deal with behaviour, including bullying, and to educate students to behave responsibly.

The anti-bullying policy also reflects the school's mission statement which states we are a "caring community" it is expected that teachers use a 'bullying preventative' style of teaching which has a number of different outcomes for students:

- treating pupils with respect
- NOT setting up victims
- Presenting good role models – using power and authority appropriately
- Explicitly stating that bullying is not acceptable
- Active process aimed at changing pupil attitudes.

The policy is in line with the school's Health and Safety Policy, behaviour policy and Safeguarding policy. The school is committed to providing a caring and safe community within which students can thrive.

2. What is Bullying?

Bullying is behaviour by an individual or group, repeated over time, that intentionally hurts another individual or group either physically or emotionally. Bullying can take many forms (for instance, cyber-bullying via text messages, social media or gaming, which can include the use of images and video) and is often motivated by prejudice against particular groups, for example on grounds of race, religion, gender, sexual orientation, special educational needs or disabilities, or because a child is adopted, in care or has caring responsibilities. It might be motivated by actual differences between children, or perceived differences. Stopping violence and ensuring immediate physical safety is obviously our first priority, but emotional bullying can be equally more damaging than physical.

3. Cyberbullying

Cyberbullying is bullying that takes place using technology. Whether on social media sites, through a mobile phone, or gaming sites, the effects can be devastating for the young person involved. There are ways to help prevent a child from being cyberbullied and to help them cope and stop the bullying if it does happen. 'The Searching, screening and confiscation Advice for headteachers, school staff and governing bodies January 2018' policy empowers staff that when an electronic device, such as a mobile phone, has been seized by a member of staff who has been formally authorised by the Head Teacher, that staff member can examine data or files, and delete these, where there is good reason to do so. There is no need for the school to seek parental consent to search through a young person's mobile phone.

4. Policy aims

The policy reflects current guidance from the Department for Education. The policy aims to reduce bullying by:

- Ensuring that those connected with the school understand what the term 'bullying' means and that bullying will not be tolerated under any circumstances.
- Putting clear strategies in place for preventing and dealing with any behaviour deemed as bullying.
- Promoting a school ethos where bullying is regarded as unacceptable by everyone.
- Ensuring a safe and secure environment in which everyone is able to learn and work.
- Providing a transparent, easily understood system for responding to reported incidents of bullying.

The intention of this policy is that it will be used as a working document by the school community: staff, pupils and parents.

5. Key staff

All staff will take responsibility for dealing with any incidents of bullying. There is a clear line of responsibility and referral for dealing with incidents: The Form Tutor will be the member of staff initially responsible for dealing with incidents within their form and will discuss with their Head of Learning.

Should it be necessary, the Form Tutor will refer the matter to the Head of Learning who will then take over the responsibility. Should the matter still not be resolved, it will be referred to the Assistant Headteacher, a member of the Senior Management Team attached to the relevant Year group, or department who will deal with the matter. Should the matter still not be resolved, this will then be referred to the Deputy Headteacher and finally the Headteacher.

In curriculum areas, the pattern should be replicated – classroom teacher, HOD, AHT and so on. HOL should be kept informed from the HOD.

Occasionally, bullying is reported to staff and the structure above may not be suitable. Heads of Learning should be alerted to this and discuss the actions with appropriate Assistant Head Teacher.

6. The defining features of bullying

Bullying:

- is a form of aggressive behaviour, which is usually hurtful and deliberate
- is invariably persistent, sometimes continuing for weeks, months or even years
- is difficult for those being bullied to defend themselves.
- an underlying feature is an abuse of power and a desire to intimidate and dominate.
- can be subtle
- is essentially a covert activity witnessed by children and not by adults

Types of bullying:

At SJP, we take all kinds of bullying seriously. There are different forms of bullying, the most significant of which are listed below:

- Physical (hitting, kicking, taking or damaging belongings)
- Verbal (name calling, teasing, repeated teasing ,racist, sexual or homophobic remarks threats, spreading nasty rumours)

- Indirect ('Psychological') excluding someone from groups, moving away as a person approaches, leaving notes, failure to speak or acknowledge a person the "look")
- Cyberbullying (sending abusive, threatening or upsetting messages)

The school considers **all forms of bullying to be equally unacceptable**. It is important not to under-estimate the long-term effects that 'psychological' (non-physical) forms of bullying can have. Those who have suffered from bullying often report that they recover from any physical injury or pain much more quickly than they get over the feelings of humiliation, anxiety or fear.

Unless checked, 'low key' bullying such as shoving or name-calling can escalate if the bully finds that the bullied pupils respond in a particular way. Bullying is recognised as being different from other kinds of aggressive behaviour: it is often ongoing, and is an abuse of power.

The school recognizes that bullying may not be merely confined to the way children treat each other: Occasionally children may bully adults, especially when children are in gangs, and when children seek to undermine or intimidate adults.

Occasionally children may experience bullying behaviour from adults; this is often when adults abuse their power and authority.

For further information on cyberbullying as listed above, please refer to SJP's Safeguarding and e-Safety Policy.

7. Strategies for the prevention of bullying

At SJP, we continue to develop a range of strategies to prevent bullying. Below are some recommended strategies which the school currently undertakes and is developing:

Supervision

Students supervised by staff at lunch and break. This includes Senior Members of Staff, Heads of Learning, Learning Coaches and TA's.

Corridors

Staff should be present on corridors at lesson change over.

Year 7 separate yard

This includes a range of equipment and games facilities. At SJP, we understand that it is important that children are occupied to prevent boredom. Therefore, we have an 'active playground' where games and sports of different types are encouraged.

Shorter lunch times help reduce the opportunity for bullying situations to arise.

At present (2019/20), lunchtimes are split Yr 7, 8 and Sixth Form on first lunch, Yr 9, 10, 11 on second lunch.

One-way system

This helps reduce opportunity for conflict on corridors e.g. students pushing each other, deliberately walking into each other, overcrowding etc.

Boy/girl seating plan in class

Teaching staff should have seating plans for their classes and are expected to follow this policy in all lessons.

Materials

Teachers are expected to ensure that there are enough materials for all students to use.

Punctuality to lessons

Staff are expected to arrive on time to lessons and be waiting on corridors to greet students. Most staff have their own classrooms, which enables this to happen.

Behaviour Policy

Staff are expected to follow the school's behaviour policy and use it as a working document.

Immediate Action

Members of staff to whom bullying incidents are reported should ensure that any incidents are either dealt with immediately by him /herself or passed on to the Head of Learning.

Classroom management

Teachers are expected avoid the use of sarcasm and threats as a means of classroom management.

Consistent sanctions

Teachers are expected to use sanctions in a consistent fashion, according to the school's behaviour policy.

Individual recognition

The school's ethos values effort and achievement relative to individuals, not only high achievement. This is illustrated in the school's annual Awards Evening, as well as termly achievement assemblies and in the SJP newsletter.

Awareness and familiarity with policy

All stakeholders including staff, students, parents and governors should be aware of the policy, its purpose as a working document, and how to deal with bullying should it arise.

Buddy System

Yr 7 students identified as vulnerable at induction are introduced to a Sixth Form buddy or older student to assist in the transition from primary school.

Assertiveness Training/self-esteem work/ restorative justice for bullied pupils.

This will often be undertaken by ECM co-ordinator after referral from HOL.

Chaplain Support

This is offered to some vulnerable students as an extra form of emotional support.

TACKLING BULLYING THROUGH THE CURRICULUM EXISTING CURRICULUM

- Many subject areas could be used to promote anti-bullying values and co-operative behaviour. For example,
- making direct reference to the behaviour of a group as illustrated by an incident in history, current affairs or fictional account.
- DVDs, plays, poetry and fiction used as a basis for discussion
- Art work, creative writing, role-play, and drama

- Most subjects allow for group tasks, experiments or team building
- Drama can be used in assemblies for promoting anti-bullying behaviour
- PSHE
 - Students explore different forms of bullying and its effects.
 - Students consider the role played by all in the bullying process by considering responsibilities of the whole community in preventing and tackling bullying.
 - Students are made aware of where to go for help if they are a victim or witness of bullying, as well as developing an understanding of the need for rules and rights.
 - Students explore what can be done to stamp out bullying, encouraging pupils to take responsibility for their own behaviour and to challenge the concept of bullying.
 - This is taught throughout the Key Stages, exploring text and cyber bullying and how to tackle it.
 - Lessons involve scenarios, drama, discussion, and reflection.
- Assemblies led by SLT / HOLs.
- Assemblies held by external agencies
- Posters visible throughout the school

Teaching styles that help reduce bullying

School staff should consider the possible influence of their own behaviour towards students.

Bullying preventative teaching:

- Treating pupils with respect.
- NOT setting up victims. E.g. sitting a child near a student who you aware could intimidate him /her.
- Presenting good role models – using power and authority appropriately.
- Explicitly stating that bullying is NOT acceptable.

8. Reporting Bullying

Pupils often report bullying. They rarely keep it to themselves, no matter how worried they may feel about being found out they have told someone, or how insignificant they may feel it is, or how much they may be perceived by others as being weak.

It is only when staff are told about the bullying that the school can act to stop it, and support the victim.

The school has a clear reporting system. Pupils at SJP usually either:

- Tell a trusted adult in school or**
- Tell their Form Tutor, Head of Learning or Learning Coach.**

Pupils should tell an adult as soon as it happens. They are encouraged to do so and the culture and ethos at SJP leads students to understand that this is something which will not be tolerated.

The **Form Tutor, Head of Learning or Learning Coach** is usually the main point of contact at first. If pupils decide to tell another adult in school, the concern will be shared as soon as possible with the Form Tutor/Learning Coach/HOL. One of these named adults will discuss the problem with the child.

If it is decided the issue is of a bullying nature, the pupil will be asked to complete a statement where s/he will write down the details of the bullying incident.

The incident will be referred immediately to the pupil's **Head of Learning**.

The Head of Learning will then investigate the concern, and if necessary, take appropriate action. This may include sanctions as listed on SJP's Behaviour Policy and E Safety Policies, depending on the nature of the behaviour. It may include parental contact, detentions, Assisi Centre, restorative intervention, SLT intervention, segregation at break and lunch or exclusion. The decision on the sanctions will be made by the HOL/AHT/DHT/HT, and parents of the perpetrator will be informed.

The Head of Learning will contact the parents of both parties and put in place measures to support the victim and solve the problem with the perpetrator. This may involve input from the **ECM Co-ordinator**.

Should the bullying continue, the Head of Learning will refer the matter to the relevant **Assistant Head Teacher**.

If the bullying still persists, it will then be referred to the **Deputy Head Teacher**, and ultimately the **Head Teacher**.

Parents reporting bullying

Parents may contact school, often in some distress, to report that their child has been bullied. Their concerns will be taken seriously. Reception is the first contact for parents telephoning school. Therefore, all staff should be familiar with the policy. Parents contacting the school will be referred to the Head of Learning for the relevant Year group.

Good practice includes:

- Recognising that the parent may be angry or upset.
- Keeping an open mind – bullying may be difficult to detect, so lack of staff awareness does not mean bullying has not occurred.
- Remaining calm and understanding.
- Making clear that the school does care and that something will be done, explaining the school policy and making sure that procedures are followed. When a case is referred to a Head of Learning, the member of staff should:
 - Ask for details and record the information.
 - Make a further appointment to explain actions and find out if it has stopped.
 - Follow up with staff to ensure that appropriate action has been taken.
 - Ensure that school policy has been implemented.

Many of the same points apply when the school has to tell parents that their child has been involved in bullying. Parents are more likely to respond positively to a calm approach, which follows the agreed guidelines of an anti-bullying policy with which they are familiar.

9. Bullying outside of school premises

As per Department of Further Education Guidance 2017, SJP will look into the incidents of bullying outside of the school in accordance with this policy. This can include travel to and from school whilst in school uniform, sanctions may follow, in line with the school's Behaviour Policy.

10. Recording bullying

All records relating to bullying incidents will be stored electronically and in the Head of Learning pupil file. Sanctions for incidents will be recorded in the pupil files.

The Level 3 Behaviour Form includes a category of 'bullying' to be filled in by relevant middle or senior manager.

11. Responding to bullying

The fundamental aim of the policy is to work towards the prevention of bullying, rather than reacting to incidents of bullying with a list of sanctions. Although bullying needs to be stopped, punishment is rarely the most effective method of responding to pupils who bully others.

Therefore, it is important that the school considers a range of responses to bullying and considers each incident individually.

Parents should be involved in the process of responding to bullying incidents. Early communication is recommended in order to deal with the problem as soon as possible.

Involving Parents

Involving parents is often a key to success or failure in anti-bullying initiatives. Though not always apparent, parental approval is important to children of all ages. The majority of parents support anti-bullying measures and are keen to participate. Consultation is important, helping create an ethos in which positive behaviour is encouraged, and bullying considered unacceptable.

Useful approaches include:

Monitoring and evaluation

The policy will be updated again in September 2020 and will involve all pupils, staff and parents. The policy will then be monitored by key staff i.e. Heads of Learning and Assistant Headteachers who have overall responsibility for Year groups.

Key staff will monitor the effectiveness of the policy and will consider:

- Regular consultation and communication (policy available on website).
- Advising parents about possible consequences of bringing valuable items to school (through parental handbooks).
- The views of parents and pupils
- The process for reporting bullying
- The number of pupils reporting bullying and types of incidents; the system of storing records via SIMS and HOL records

The effectiveness of the policy will be evaluated by the Senior Management Team. After a whole year, the possible effects might include:

- The range of actions taken when dealing with bullying Preventative measures

- Staff more vigilant and responsive to bullying Fewer pupils report being bullied or that they bully others
- More pupils say they would not join in bullying someone else More pupils would tell a member of staff if they were being bullied.

APPENDICES

Appendix 1 - Specialist organisations to support the anti-bullying policy

The Anti-Bullying Alliance (ABA) (www.anti-bullyingalliance.org.uk): Founded in 2002 by NSPCC and National Children's Bureau, the Anti-Bullying Alliance (ABA) brings together over 100 organisations into one network to develop and share good practice across the whole range of bullying issues.

Beatbullying (www.beatbullying.org): A bullying prevention charity with an emphasis on working directly with children and young people. In addition to lesson plans and resources for Parent/Carers, Beatbullying have developed the Cyber mentors peer support programme for young people affected by cyber-bullying.

Kidscape (www.kidscape.org.uk): Charity established to prevent bullying and promote child protection providing advice for young people, professionals and Parent/Carers about different types of bullying and how to tackle it. They also offer specialist training and support for school staff, and assertiveness training for young people. Restorative Justice Council: Includes best practice guidance for practitioners 2011.

Cyber-bullying: ChildNet International (www.childnet.com): Specialist resources for young people to raise awareness of online safety and how to protect themselves.

Appendix 2 - FACTORS WHICH INFLUENCE CHILDREN IN BECOMING BULLIES OR VICTIMS

Children who Bully

Homes

- Little status gained – little verbal interaction physical/verbal aggression features
- Parent models bullying behaviour – few rewards/praise
- Limited interest in the child
- Negative sanctions

Individual

- Low self-esteem
- Low academic attainments
- Charisma/dominance
- Few positive skills

School

- No rules/boundaries
- Intervention
- No policy re unacceptability
- Models of teachers bullying – covert support
- Opportunities to bully
- Geography of the school
- Lack of supervision
- Poor communication with parents

Children who are Victims

Home

- Possibly overprotective- not allowing independence – non assertive role models
- Lack awareness about growing up
- Lack of “street cred” – poor appearance

Individual

- Minor disabilities – clumsiness – physical features – lack of assertion – sensitivity, few friends – quiet – problems making retaining friendships
- Low self-esteem – few attributes

School

- No acknowledgement – no security
- No policy – weak pastoral system
- No communication with parents

SECTION TWO

Signs and Symptoms

There is no fool proof way of knowing whether a child or young person is being bullied. Bullying is a covert and even secretive activity. Reducing bullying therefore involves effective communication between members of staff and parents as part of a school culture where talking about bullying and asserting one's right to feel safe are viewed as particularly important.

The following are some useful indicators, which can lead to a more detailed discussion of what is happening to a young person.

- Unexplained bruises, scratches, cuts, bite marks
- Belongings repeatedly going missing
- Refuses to say why he/she is unhappy
- Distressed at the thought of going to school
- Refuses to go to school
- Reports aches and pains
- Frightened of walking to school alone
- Changes route to school
- Has started taking longer to get home from school
- Seems withdrawn/unhappy or in a world of his/her own
- Cries at bedtime
- Returns home with torn clothes or damaged schoolwork
- Returns home hungry (lunch/snack money stolen)
- Asks for more money than usual or steals money (to pay off bully)
- Loses interest in schoolwork or finds it harder to concentrate
- Refuses to go out to play or stops going to cubs/brownies in the evenings or at weekends

Appendix 3 - Effects and Consequences of Bullying

Bullying is frequently an aggressive and abusive activity, which is potentially very harmful and dangerous. There is often a need to impress upon members of the school community the serious consequences of letting bullying continue without taking any action.

These effects can be seen at any or all of the following levels: Individual level –Safety and happiness of pupils

- lives are made miserable – injury
- loss of self-confidence – low self-esteem increasingly
- isolated as others “move away”
- poor self-esteem – self blame
- truancy
- poor concentration affects learning and levels of achievement
- subject options choice to avoid other children
- later adult disturbance/depression, death

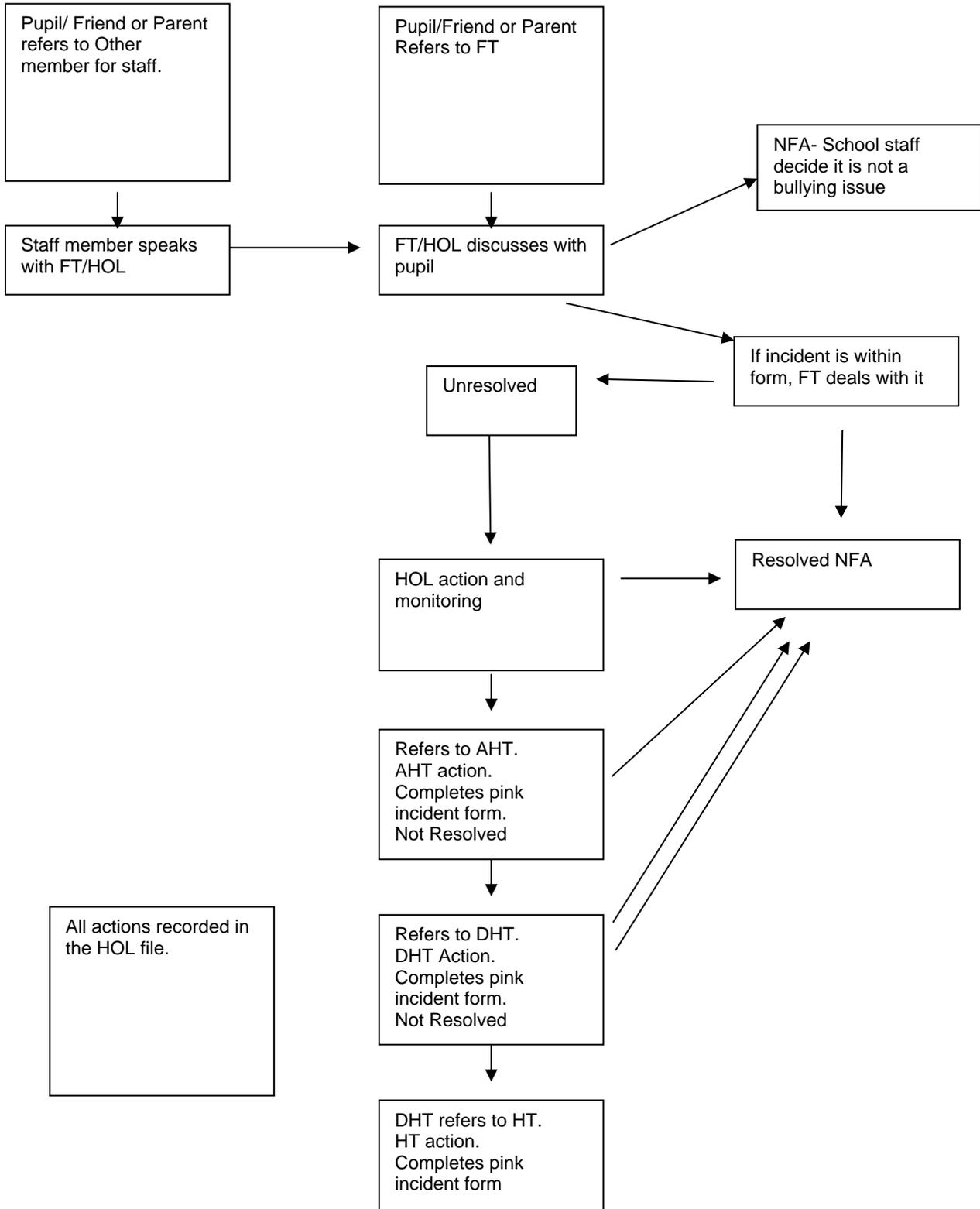
Classroom level

- dynamics of the class group can maintain or prevent bullying
- bystanders learn that bullying works – they learn “putdowns” and ways of exerting power “ripple effects”
- disruptions and unease within the classroom

Systems level

20% of those being bullied take time off because of it
bullying results in a reputation for being an ineffective, uncaring school a school that parents would not opt to send their children to
provides a poor model of behaviour that affects the ethos of the school

Appendix 4 – Flow chart for follow up of a report of bullying



Staff Member with Responsibility:	Head Teacher
Reviewed by:	Mr P McLoughlin
Approved by:	Governors – Draft – Awaiting approval at next meeting
Reviewed Date:	September 2019
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