

ST PATRICK'S CATHOLIC PRIMARY SCHOOL

ANTI BULLYING POLICY- under review January 2015

MISSION STATEMENT

At St. Patrick's school we will provide excellence in education inspired by the practice of our Catholic Faith.

We will make the most of all our gifts in our safe, happy and caring school. With Jesus Christ as our friend and model, we will help each other to grow in the love of God, developing self esteem, and a love of learning.

School Definition of Bullying Behaviour

Bullying can be described as being 'a deliberate act done to cause distress solely in order to give a feeling of power, status or other gratification to the person bullying. It can range from ostracising, namecalling, teasing, threats and extortion, through to physical assault on persons and/or their property. It can begin as an unresolved frightening incident which casts a shadow over a child's life.'

Bullying can take place inside school, outside school and online.

Bullying is:

- **Deliberately hurtful**
- **Repeated ore reinforced over a period of time**
- **Difficult for victims to defend themselves against**

Bullying involves an imbalance of power. If two pupils of equal power or strength have an occasional fight or quarrel, this is NOT bullying. Such situations would be dealt with by following the Behaviour Policy.

At St Patrick's children have written their own definitions of bullying behaviour:

'Bullying is hurtful; it hurts people and it's horrible.'

'Bullying brings your confidence level right down.'

"Bullying is being physically hurt just because you may be different. It is mean and cruel and people get easily upset and scared by it."

Bullies often find it 'fun' to torment their 'victims.' "The bully can be the one with the real problem."

'A bully takes power over someone weaker and makes his or her life a misery so that he or she is too scared to tell anyone.'

"It can make a person want to curl up and die."

Our Mission Statement

At St Patrick's Catholic Primary School staff, parents and children work together to live out a Catholic mission in a 'safe, happy and caring' school where all " try to live like Jesus Christ" and to make the most of all their gifts. Bullying behaviour is contrary to this mission.

Vision and Values Statement

Our Vision

St Patrick's Catholic Primary School will be a model of educational excellence, consistently within the top 5% of schools in England. The School will have achieved this through the delivery of a creative and rigorous curriculum which inspires and motivates all our children to realise their God-given potential. Children will leave St Patrick's happy with who they are, confident in their abilities, polite and articulate, and ambitious for their future growth.

Our Values

Staff, Governors and the children have articulated our values as follows

We value **every individual** as a unique creation and gift of God.

We also value **community, the virtues, excellence and effort in learning** and our **reputation**- what others think of us.

In order to realise this vision and promote these values we have to be clear that at St Patrick's **Bullying behaviour, verbal, physical or indirect, will not be tolerated**. It is everyone's responsibility to aim to prevent occurrences of bullying and to deal with any incidents quickly and effectively. Research has shown time and time again that the extent of bullying in schools is greatly underestimated.

Consequently, the governors have approved this policy.

The Limits of the Policy

Bullying can be brought to the attention of staff either by the victim(s), their friend(s), their parent(s) or other interested people such as the "special person" that all children choose from among the staff.

If the bullying is taking place at school, it is easier for the school authorities to deal with. If it is taking place outside school and/or online, the school will do all in its power to bring the bullying to an end and will seek the cooperation of parents and other institutions such as play centres and other schools with this end in mind.

The school does all it can to make sure that the children are safe online at school and have the best advice about staying safe online generally.

(see our Esafety Policy.)

Responding to Bullying Behaviour

All teachers should respond as immediately as possible to a child after an incident or disclosure of bullying.

Strategies for dealing with bullying

There is no one strategy that will prevent bullying behaviour. The more strategies the school has the more likely bullying behaviour will be reduced. **At St Patrick's we are all committed to practising the virtues of Charity (Love), Faith, Hope, Justice, Temperance, Courage, and Prudence.**

This shapes the language that we use to encourage good, virtuous behaviour and allows the children and staff to think more specifically about how to be 'good'.

For example, we encourage the children to be charitable, to 'think the best of each other', and 'do the best for each other'. If children witness someone being bullied, they must 'do the best for the person' and tell an adult about the situation.

Another example- we encourage the children to have faith, not only in God, but in the adults at school who they ask for help. We ask the children to have faith in those adults, to trust their teachers and other staff to sort out any social difficulties including bullying which they may encounter.

Special Person

At St Patrick's every child has the opportunity to choose a 'special person' in whom they will confide if anything is worrying them. They can choose their class teacher or any other member of staff. This allows a victim of bullying to confide in an adult in an initially low key way, with the minimum of embarrassment and public scrutiny.

'No blame approach'

At St Patrick's we have adopted the '**No Blame Approach to Bullying**'. The emphasis is always on a caring, listening approach. Pupils who display bullying behaviour are often victims too and that is why they bully.

The Headteacher should be kept informed about alleged bullying.

Step 1 Interview with the victim

When the teacher finds out that bullying has happened, s/he starts by talking to the victim about his/her feelings and may write these down. If the pupil is unable to do this then the interviewing adult will scribe for him/her. The pupil should be questioned about the incidents and the pupils involved.

Step 2 Interview the children accused of bullying.

The pupil(s) who have been involved in bullying are interviewed individually. They are encouraged to be honest about what has been happening and asked to explain why they think that the 'victim' is unhappy at school. They should not be interrogated!! A record of such meetings should also be kept.

Step 3 Convene a meeting with the people involved

The group of pupils who have been involved then meet after the following actions have taken place:

- Identify those involved in bullying. Obtain witnesses if possible. Advise the Headteacher
- Discussions with the person who has bullied. Confront them with the details and ask them to tell the truth about the situation/incident.
- Make it clear that bullying is not acceptable at St Patrick's School.
- The meeting will include some bystanders or colluders who joined in but did not initiate any bullying. A group of 6-8 young people works well.

Explain the problem

The group are told about how the victim feels and might read out the account written by the victim or an appropriate poem or picture.

Share responsibility

The teacher does not attribute blame but states that s/he knows that the group are responsible and can do something about it.

Ask the group for their ideas

Each member of the group is encouraged to suggest a way in which the victim could be helped to feel happier. The teacher gives some positive responses but does not necessarily go on to extract a promise of improved behaviour.

Leave it up to them

The teacher ends the meeting by passing over the responsibility to the group to solve the problem. S/he arranges to meet with them again the following week to see how things are going. It should be made clear to the victim, that if any other instances occur before then, s/he should report it immediately.

Step 4 Meet with the group again

About a week later, the teacher meets with the group to discuss how things are going. The teacher or another adult deputed by the teacher may need to ask the victim on an individual basis how things are in the interim. This allows the teacher to monitor the situation and keeps the young people involved in the process. If necessary, record in the Incident Book available in the Office.

Sanctions

Persistent bullying is regarded as very serious and if the situation recurs either with the same 'victim' or with others, then the school's Behaviour Policy will be implemented and parents informed.

Preventative Measures

The ethos of the school

St Patrick's is a Catholic Primary School and everything we do is within the framework of our Catholic faith. Our Christian mission is emphasised and encouraged in all aspects of school life, not just in Religious Education lessons and collective worship. Staff and children are committed to maintaining an atmosphere of mutual respect for each other. We encourage children to develop as individuals and to enjoy all aspects of school life, to care for one another and be friendly.

The Special Person

If it is suspected that a particular child may be the victim of bullying, then that child's special person may have a chat with them to see if they are all right and to find out if any bullying is or could take place.

The curriculum approach to anti-bullying

The school ethos is supported with planned curriculum opportunities to introduce the subject of bullying behaviour. Inclusion in the curriculum for each year group acts as a reminder to pupils about the expectations of the school and also provides opportunities for staff to support pupils through the teaching of personal and social skills and address any safety concerns pupils may have.

Other preventative strategies

Training for teaching staff, support staff, welfare staff, governors, pupils and parents is acknowledged as an important preventative measure. A range of issues can be addressed both in-house and through LA training.

School Psychotherapists

We have two counsellors, one from the Catholic Children's Society and another from the Tavistock Centre who are available to children and to parents to give advice to victims or perpetrators of bullying or their parents. These counsellors are also available to staff to advise them on how to deal with any social difficulties that the children may be experiencing including bullying.

Intervention Strategies

Circle time is part of the planned PSHE curriculum. Teachers and pupils sit together in a circle for discussion, games and enjoyable activities. This creates a safe place to explore issues and concerns. It encourages effective communication and improves self-esteem. **It is a time when promoting the virtues to deal with any social difficulties can be discussed.**

Co-operative group work takes place regularly in all classes. Pupils work together on shared tasks, co-operation and accountability, trust building. Pupils learn to work together, to manage conflict within a group and share common goals.

Other strategies such as a **Circle of friends may be used to** build relationships around a vulnerable pupil. This **takes place with the consent of both parent and child.** **Promoting the virtues or one particular virtue may be part of the plans for a particular circle of friends.**

New pupils are helped to make friends through the induction programme; this improves inclusion and acceptance in a group.

Implementation of the Policy

The implementation of the policy is the responsibility of the Assistant Headteacher who leads on PSHE, under the direction of the Headteacher. Everyone involved with the school shares the policy and all are aware of their responsibility to report observed incidents of bullying. This includes parents and pupils. The policy and advice is available to parents and is shared with parents of children new to the school along with the school's behaviour management policy.

Monitoring the Anti-Bullying Policy Process

This policy and procedures will be regularly monitored. At key points during the year pupils and staff will be reminded of the policy and procedures.

Evaluating the Policy

Discussion with pupils and sometimes the use of a questionnaire will be carried out with pupils, so that the school can monitor and evaluate the effectiveness of this policy. The Headteacher and SLT will monitor the situation via records of incidents of bullying, the analysis of questionnaires and **regular discussions with staff, pupils and parents.**

The Headteacher will report to the Governing Body on a termly basis.

Appendix

Advice about Dealing with Alleged Bullying

- **Attend**

Listen to what is being said and try not to show shock or disbelief. Patience is needed, wait during silences and prompt gently

- **Accept**

Keep an open mind. You never know whether what you are told is true or not

- **Allay** fears

Reassure the pupil that they were right to tell. However do not promise confidentiality

- **Annotate**

Note what is said

- **Assuage**

There may be guilt. Reassure the pupil that it was not their fault that they were being bullied; that they are not the only person to have suffered; if the person who bullied gets into trouble it is his or her fault and nothing to do with the pupil who told.

RESPONDING

- Try not to ask leading questions i.e. 'What did _____ do next?'
- Ask open questions like 'Anything else to tell me?'
- Use prompts like 'yes' and 'and'
- Try not to criticise in personal terms (all the children are good but all are capable of choosing to behave well or badly). The behaviour is what needs the attention (So say "**Bullying is not acceptable**" **not** "You are a bully").
- Reconciliation is what you are aiming at
- Explain your next steps
- Support and offer help either from a pupil or adult in the future
- Try to see the matter through yourself. Keep in contact with the pupil

NOTING

- Make brief notes and write them up as soon as possible in the Incident Book
- Record date, time, place, non-verbal behaviour, words used by the pupil
- Record statements, observable things, not your interpretations or assumptions. Parents may wish to see your notes.
- Try to keep relaxed. If this is serious or upsetting, you might need some support yourself! **REMEMBER TO KEEP EVIDENCE!**