

ST. CATHERINE'S SCHOOL

ANTI-BULLYING POLICY

(Senior and Prep)

ST CATHERINE'S SCHOOL MISSION STATEMENT

Our Vision

To be a school that lives the Gospel values, promotes the dignity of every individual and is committed to excellence. We are a Catholic school where every student, regardless of individual faith:

- is **valued**
- is a member of a thriving, happy **community**
- is helped to **achieve his/her personal best**
- is given a wide range of opportunities to **develop his/her talents**
- is **prepared for the challenges** of adult life
- is helped to **understand** and fulfil his/her **responsibilities** to self, family and society.

General statement

The Governing Body values the good relationships fostered by the school, and expects that every allegation of bullying will be taken seriously. In addressing this, the School aims to pay due regard to the "Every Child Matters" agenda, where we provide a safe and happy place to learn, raise achievement, promote equality and diversity and ensure the safety and well-being of all members of the school community.

This policy has been developed in accordance with DCSF guidelines (Safe to Learn: Embedding anti-bullying work in schools)

All staff, pupils and parents should be aware of the negative effects that bullying can have on individuals and the school in general, and should work towards ensuring that pupils can work in an environment without fear.

It is commonly recognised that bullying is a form of cruelty to children. It is unacceptable at St Catherine's School and will not be tolerated. It is important to recognise that although bullying does happen we must seek to nurture a culture in which pupils are valued as people; a culture where bullying, when it occurs, is dealt with in a firm, sensitive and caring way.

Aims

- To demonstrate that the school takes bullying seriously and it will not be tolerated
- To take measures to prevent all forms of bullying in the school, on off-site activities and cyberbullying
- To support everyone in the actions to identify and protect those who might be bullied
- To demonstrate to all that the safety and happiness of pupils is enhanced by dealing positively with bullying
- To encourage pupils to tell someone that they are being bullied

Definition

Bullying is deliberately hurtful behaviour, repeated over a period of time. It happens when an individual (**or a group**) goes out of her way deliberately and persistently to threaten, intimidate, abuse or hurt someone else.

Psychological bullying is when a victim is taunted and called hurtful names. Often the person who engages in this form of behaviour does not consider it to be bullying, but considers it to be "a joke". If the victim does not find teasing or taunting funny then it is not.

Physical bullying should not be seen merely in terms of a pupil being physically assaulted. It can include damage done to the victim's property, clothing or schoolwork. Bullying can be both mental and physical as, for example, when a group of pupils gang up against an individual or isolates her.

Homophobic bullying involves the targeting of individuals on the basis of their perceived or actual sexuality or sexual orientation. Homophobic bullying can also include name-calling such as the use of the word "gay" as an insult, gestures, taunts, or 'jokes'. Individuals are commonly singled out for abuse if they do not conform to a stereotypical masculine or feminine gender image.

Examples of *sexual harassment or bullying by gender* include name calling, use of sexual innuendo and unwanted propositioning and commenting on appearance and attractiveness.

In the Stephen Lawrence Inquiry Report by Sir William MacPherson of Cluny, February 1999, *racial harassment* was defined as "any incident which is perceived to be racist by the victim or any other person It includes all those unwanted actions by a person or a group of people directed at people of different ethnic origin which cause humiliation, offence or distress or interfere with their performance or create an unpleasant working environment and are motivated by racial considerations.

It is important to note that what might appear to be a bullying incident could be a straightforward act of aggression and should be treated as such.

Cyberbullying

Cyberbullying can be defined as the use of Information and Communications Technology (ICT), particularly mobile phones and the internet, deliberately to upset someone else. It can be an extension of face-to-face bullying, with technology providing the bully with another route to harass their target. However, it differs in several significant ways from other kinds of bullying: the invasion of home and personal space; the difficulty in controlling electronically circulated messages; the size of the audience; perceived anonymity; and even the profile of the person doing the bullying and their target.

Cyberbullying takes different forms: threats and intimidation; harassment or "cyber-stalking" (e.g. repeatedly sending unwanted texts or instant messages); vilification / defamation; exclusion or peer rejection; impersonation; unauthorised publication of private information or images (including what are sometimes misleadingly referred to as 'happy slapping' images); and manipulation.

Some cyberbullying is clearly deliberate and aggressive, but it is important to recognise that some incidents of cyberbullying are known to be unintentional and the result of simply not thinking about the consequences. What may be sent as a joke, may not be received as one, and indeed the distance that technology allows in communication means the sender may not see the impact of the message on the receiver. There is also less opportunity for either party to resolve any misunderstanding or to feel empathy. It is important that pupils are made aware of the effects of their actions.

Pupils need to know that cyberbullying incidents will be dealt with in the same way as other bullying incidents even if they happen out of school hours. Also, essential elements of prevention are awareness raising and promoting understanding about cyberbullying. Awareness is raised through discussion in PSHE lessons, pastoral evenings for parents and assemblies. It is important that pupils are informed of reporting

routes as an element of prevention. Pupils, parents and staff are made aware of the different ways available to report cyberbullying incidents.

Why do bullies bully?

A bully often comes from a background in which bullying is considered to be "normal" in some way. She believes that she can get the respect of her peers by bullying. She is often inadequate, unhappy and insecure. Frequently the only means by which she can feel superior is to dominate those whom she perceives to be weak. The bully may need help. Research suggests that to regard bullying as a straightforward discipline problem is no longer acceptable. Pre-emptive discipline could make the problem worse. It could reinforce the bully's perception of her esteem among her peer group, and exacerbate her and their antagonism towards the victim. It is important that a bully is helped to see the hurt she inflicts on her victims and made to understand that her behaviour cannot be tolerated. In the long term if a bully is able to get away with her bullying she is likely to continue to bully in later life.

Who gets bullied?

It is important to state that anyone can be bullied but that no one deserves to be bullied. Whatever the reason, a victim must be helped and protected. She needs to be assisted to develop the personal resources she needs in order to overcome the difficulties she is facing.

Responsibilities

The Governing Body will endorse agreed strategies and discuss the Headmistress's annual report on the working of this policy.

The Headmistress will:

- Ensure that all staff have an opportunity of discussing strategies and reviewing them
- Determine the strategies and procedures
- Discuss development of the strategies with SMT
- Ensure appropriate training is available
- Ensure that the procedures are brought to the attention of all staff, parents and pupils
- Report annually to the Governing Body

The Deputy Head/Head of Prep will:

- Be responsible for the day-to-day management of the policy and systems
- Keep the Headmistress informed of incidents
- Arrange relevant staff training
- Determine how best to involve parents in the solution of individual problems
- Advise on methods for encouraging pupils to let it be known that they are being bullied
- Make a termly report to the Headmistress

Heads of Year will:

- Be responsible for ensuring that the School's positive strategies are put into practice
- Know the school's procedure and deal with any incidents that are reported
- Put into practice methods for encouraging pupils to tell someone that they are being bullied

Form Tutors will:

- Be responsible for liaising with Head of Year/Deputy Head/Head of Prep over all incidents involving pupils in their form
- Be involved in any agreed strategy to achieve a solution
- Take part in the anti-bullying programme in the PSHE programme

All staff will:

- Know the policy and procedures
- Deal with incidents according to the policy
- Never let any incidence of bullying pass by unreported, whether on-site or during an off-site activity
- Participate in the PSHE programme

Anti-Bullying Education in the Curriculum

The school will raise the awareness of the anti-social nature of bullying through a PSHE programme, school assemblies, the school council, use of tutorial time and in the Schemes of Work as appropriate.

The Deputy Head/Head of Prep is responsible for initiating and developing with appropriate colleagues an anti-bullying programme as part of the PSHE programme.

Procedures

Signs of Bullying

Pupils who are being bullied may show changes in behaviour, e.g. becoming shy and nervous, feigning illness, taking unusual absences or clinging to adults. There may be changes in work patterns, a lack of concentration, or truancy. All staff should be aware of these possibilities and must promptly report any suspicions of bullying to the Head of Year/Deputy Head/Head of Prep. Pupils will be encouraged to report incidents of bullying through a positive programme of awareness and action.

Strategies for Dealing with Bullying

There are essentially two strands to our policy:

1. Prevention – the whole school approach to awareness and prevention
2. Dealing with incidents

1. Prevention

i) Create an Ethos of Respect

- (a) Our ethos must be one in which all pupils are valued not only by the teaching staff but also by their peers.
- (b) The way in which staff treat pupils and each other must reflect this ethos. Pupils should not be humiliated and made to feel inadequate. When dealing with pupils – or even talking to colleagues about them – we should avoid the following:
- Sarcastic comments
 - Derogatory nick-names
 - Dominating behaviour
- (c) The staff must be vigilant and observant.
- i) The School should be properly patrolled during break and lunch periods.
 - ii) All staff should be sensitive to changes in behaviour, moodiness, and patterned absenteeism.
 - iii) It is the responsibility of all staff to draw the attention of the Year Head or Deputy Head to a pupil over whom problems may be sensed.

ii) Create a 'Be Prepared to Tell' Culture

In order to combat the culture of silence, a culture of being prepared to tell should be encouraged. This can be done in a number of ways. The Headmistress in her address to newly arrived pupils will emphasize that any pupil being bullied should speak to her Year Head/Deputy Head, or to a member of staff. Serious consideration will be given to the topic within the framework of peer group pressure in Religious Education/Personal and Social Education. Training of school prefects will also address the problem of bullying and encourage the culture of being prepared to tell. Assemblies will, from time to time, focus upon it. All in all, there must be communicated an emphasis that not only is it right to tell, it is important to do so. We need to listen carefully to pupils when they are willing to talk about bullying and be sensitive to their need for privacy and respect

Dealing with Incidents

- If bullying is suspected or reported the incident will be dealt with initially and immediately by the teacher approached
- If a racial element to the bullying is suspected the Deputy Head/Head of Prep must be informed immediately
- The teacher will record the details of the incident and inform the Head of Year/Deputy Head/Head of Prep
- The Head of Year/Deputy Head/Head of Prep will interview all the parties and make a record
- Staff teaching the bullied pupil and the Form Tutor will be informed
- The Head of Year/Form Tutor will determine in consultation with the Deputy Head/Head of Prep the appropriate strategy to combat the bullying
- Parents will be kept informed by the Head of Year/Deputy Head/Head of Prep
- Any sanction against the bullies will be determined by the Head of Year/Deputy Head/Head of Prep.

Bullied Pupils

Staff who deal with pupils who have been bullied must always offer reassurance. Pupils who have been bullied will be given support determined by the Form Tutor/Head of Year/Deputy Head/Head of Prep (as appropriate) in consultation with the pupil.

Sanctions

Disciplinary sanctions have three main purposes, namely to:

- Impress on the perpetrator that what she has done is unacceptable
- Deter her from repeating the behaviour
- Signal to other pupils that the behaviour is unacceptable and therefore deter them from doing it

Any of the School's formal punishments can be used against bullies as appropriate. For persistent offenders or incidents considered as gross acts of aggression a pupil could be permanently excluded.

Involvement of Parents

Parents, as well as all staff and pupils, should know that the school will not tolerate bullying, and takes a positive approach to educating pupils to combat it. Parents of pupils who are being bullied and parents of the bullies will be involved in the solution to the problem as appropriate by the Head of Year in consultation with the Deputy Head/Head of Prep. Parents will be informed of the policy and procedures and the possibility of permanent exclusion following gross acts of bullying.

Involvement of Pupils

Pupils will be involved in the positive strategies both through the school council and tutor groups. Pupils will have an input into the PSHE anti-bullying programme, and will be consulted on how it could be developed.

A major part of the programme will consist of educating pupils in how to cope with bullying. Pupils will be encouraged to tell someone they are being bullied, with strategies of how to do this covertly if they are unable to do it overtly.

Criteria for success

- i) Reduction in the number of incidents
- ii) Pupils are willing to discuss concerns
- iii) Feedback from pupils via School Council or questionnaires

Counselling

Both the victim and the bully will need to be counselled, sometimes individually and sometimes together. Evidence suggests that when the problem is tackled in this way a mutual understanding and empathy can develop. The victim must be helped to see that it is not her fault that she is being bullied. She must be

assured that she is safe and that someone is dealing with her problem. Moreover the bully must be made to see the antisocial nature of her behaviour and appreciate the hurt she is causing.

Reporting and Recording

All incidents must be recorded and reported using the school's 'Bullying Incident Form'.

Staff Training

The Deputy Head is responsible for arranging a programme of staff development, which will include anti-bullying strategies. This will include training for education support staff as well as teachers.

Monitoring and Review

The Deputy Head/Head of Prep will keep and consider reports on serious incidents, and make a termly report, with statistics, to the Headmistress. The Headmistress will consider the reports with the SMT to determine what can be learned from the incidents and how they were handled with a view to improving the school's strategies.

Bullying at St Catherine's School is not acceptable and it is important that all staff and pupils know this and that a culture is established which says just that.

Reviewed: November 2011
Next Review Date: November 2013

BULLYING INCIDENT FORM

Date bullying reported:	Reported to:
Place	
Incident <i>(include date and as much detail as possible – use a separate sheet if necessary and staple it to this form)</i>	
Pupils involved <i>AV = Alleged victim</i> <i>AP = Alleged perpetrator</i>	
Witnesses	
Action taken <i>Use an additional sheet if necessary. Include dates. After recording the action taken the form must be passed to the Head of Year and then the Deputy Head/Head of Prep (who may each need to take further action; in this case action taken at each stage must be recorded here and initialled)</i>	Initial
Parents contacted	

The completed form (together with any additional materials) must be passed on to the Deputy Head/Head of Prep. It will be filed in a 'Bullying Incident File'