



ST. JOHN THE BAPTIST'S COLLEGE

ANTI-BULLYING POLICY

Anti-Bullying Policy

St John the Baptist's College is a Catholic School committed to providing high quality education in an atmosphere of mutual respect where each individual is valued as an important member of our school family. We value the personal, moral, social and spiritual development of each student, encouraging respect for self and others including the core values of truth, kindness, integrity and compassion.

We support the mission statement of the NI Anti Bullying Forum (NIABF) in '**working towards a society where children and young people can live free from bullying**'.

(This policy has been revised to reflect Northern Ireland Anti Bullying Forum and DENI Circular 2015/22 (Relationships and Sexuality Education Guidance)

Rationale

The [Education and Libraries \(Northern Ireland\) Order 2003](#) requires all grant-aided schools to include within their discipline policy, an anti-bullying policy which includes measures to prevent all forms of bullying among pupils.

We recognise the importance of providing an educational environment that is safe, secure and conducive for maximising the full potential of the young people who attend St John the Baptist's College. We are completely opposed to bullying and will not tolerate it. It is entirely contrary to the values and principles we work and live by. All members of the school community have a right to work in a safe, secure and caring environment.

The **NIABF** defines bullying as '**the repeated use of power by one or more persons intentionally to harm, hurt or adversely affect the rights and needs of another or others**'.

It is an act of aggression, causing embarrassment, pain, or discomfort to someone. It is an abuse of power that can be planned or random. It may be perpetrated by an individual or by groups of pupils.

DE's Circular 1999/10 publication '**Pastoral Care in Schools: Child Protection**' defines bullying as '**deliberately hurtful behaviour, repeated over a period of time, where it is difficult for the target to defend him or herself**'. It also states that '**when a pupil is bullied at school, parents will normally seek support and expect that the school will take firm and effective action to eliminate the problem**'.

Aims

- To promote an anti-bullying culture
- To create a safe and secure learning community where individuals can learn without feelings of anxiety and therefore be more likely to fulfill their true potential

- To make it clear to pupils, staff, parents/guardians that bullying is an unacceptable form of behaviour
- To recognise and respect the rights of each member of our school community, ensuring the development of mutual respect, sensitivity, open mindedness and generosity towards others
- To emphasise the Christian value of 'love thy neighbour'
- Ensure pupils behave appropriately at all times in school and when representing the school on trips and during other activities
- Encourage pupils to respect authority, treating all persons in authority with courtesy and respect
- Support the personal development of all pupils by recognising and rewarding high standards of behaviour and effort

Supportive and Caring Ethos in School:

The Curriculum and Pastoral Care provisions in St John the Baptist's College aims to help and support all pupils, preparing them to cope with the demands of school and adult life thus enabling them to achieve their full potential. These provisions include measures to help meet the physical, emotional and spiritual needs of all learners within an inclusive learning environment. We acknowledge the importance of our pastoral role in the welfare of all young people and through our ethos every member of our school community is treated with respect. The Pastoral Care and Counselling Service create a supportive environment for pupils where they feel valued and supported.

The Personal Development Programme (KS4) and through LLW (KS3) allows pupils to explore key issues within their personal development including self-concepts, esteem, health and well-being, relationships and personal safety.

Preventative strategies used to promote an Anti-Bullying culture

Specific strategies used to ensure bullying is effectively addressed include:

- Publication of Anti-Bullying Policy on school website
- Dissemination of policy to all parents via email
- Dissemination of policy to all staff
- Assemblies throughout the year
- Anti-Bullying notice board
- Personal development/LLW classes
- Discussion of issues with Student Council
- Availability of school counsellor (available 1 day a week)
- Individual and group work with Learning Mentor
- Lunch and break supervision by teaching and non-teaching staff
- School uses a range of external agencies for support and guidance

Forms of Bullying

Bullying behaviour manifests itself in a variety of forms, some of which may be inter-related, and some more obvious than others.

Physical bullying	Hitting, kicking, punching
Verbal bullying	Verbal threats, taunting, name calling, rumour, malicious gossip
Emotional bullying	Being deliberately unfriendly, exclusion from peer group
Extortion bullying	Demanding money, personal property, homework

Cyber bullying (Sexting)	This takes places using electronic technology (phones, computers, tablets). It involves nasty texts, nasty chat room conversations, images, embarrassing pictures, embarrassing videos, nasty posts, fake profiles
Disability bullying	Behaviour or language related to actual or perceived physical and/or learning disability
Sectarian bullying	Behaviour or language related to actual or perceived religious belief and/or political opinion
Homophobic bullying	Behaviour or language which makes a young person feel unwelcome or marginalised because of their actual or perceived sexual orientation
Transphobic bullying	Behaviour or language on the basis of gender variance and a view that the person is not conforming to 'normal' gender roles
Racial bullying	Behaviour or language related to skin colour, culture, religion

Sexual Orientation and Gender Identity

We are aware that as young people are growing up they can experience sexual identity and orientation confusion. All pupils have the right to learn in a safe environment, to be treated with respect and dignity and not be treated any less favorably on grounds of their actual or perceived sexual orientation. Relationships and Sexuality Education will help to promote positive views regarding sexual orientation and gender identity which in turn will help to raise the self-esteem of young people who may feel different. The school will handle all issues of sexual orientation and gender identity in a sensitive and reassuring way. As a Rights Respecting School, all negative and prejudice attitudes will be challenged to create an inclusive learning environment.

Bullying on the grounds of sexual orientation is as unacceptable as it is in any other situations where someone is mistreated. All issues relating to homophobic language and bullying will be dealt with appropriately in accordance with this policy. Use of unkind language will be challenged and deemed to be unacceptable.

As with many conventional forms of bullying, many children do not tell anyone they are being bullied by another person via the internet or mobile phone. It is imperative that the pupil informs a parent/guardian or member of staff if they are being bullied through technologies such as mobile phones or the internet. If a parent/guardian discovers that their child is being bullied via the internet or mobile phone, the school advises that they should seek advice from the PSNI. If the bullying has an impact on the behaviour or relationships between pupils in school, staff will investigate the incident in line with the Behaviour Policy and procedures.

Possible signs of Bullying

Children who are being bullied may exhibit changes in behaviour:

- Becoming anxious or nervous
- Loss of appetite
- Complaining of an illness
- Reluctance to attend school
- Truancy
- Decline in attainment levels

- Demonstrating anti-social behaviour in the form of withdrawal or attention seeking

Role & Responsibilities of the School

- To be alert for any signs of distress or unusual behaviour in pupils which may indicate bullying
- To discuss bullying during form teacher time, PD classes, so that all pupils learn about the damage it causes to the child being bullied and to the person presenting bullying behaviour
- To make pupils aware of the need to report bullying
- To listen to the child who reports bullying behaviour towards themselves or others
- To report suspected or reported cases of bullying to Form Teacher/Year Head/SENCO/Head of Safeguarding/Head of Pastoral Care
- To deal with instances of bullying promptly and effectively
- To inform parents of all parties concerned about the bullying and actions taken
- To keep a record of all bullying incidents
- To encourage the development of resilience among pupils when faced with diversity
- To support and help both the person being bullied and the person bullying.

Role & Responsibilities of the Parent/Guardian

- To watch for signs of distress or unusual behaviour in their children, which might be evidence of bullying
- To be sympathetic and supportive to their child
- To advise their child not to retaliate violently to any forms of bullying
- To report the bullying to the school (form teacher, Year Head, SENCo, Head of Pastoral Care). Remember, bullying behaviour can only be resolved if it is made known to the school
- To encourage their child to report the bullying of themselves or others
- To keep a written record of any reported instances of bullying
- To co-operate with the school in resolving any difficulties involving bullying
- To seek advice from the PSNI if they know their child is being bullied outside the school environment via social networking sites, mobile phones or the internet
- To resolve situations/difficulties outside of school which may carry over into school

Role & Responsibilities of the Pupil

- To follow the Promoting Positive Behaviour and other related policies
- To refrain from becoming involved in any type of bullying behaviour, even at the risk of incurring temporary unpopularity
- To intervene, where it is safe, to protect the pupil who is being bullied
- To report to a member of staff any bullying you have experienced
- To report to a member of staff any witnessed or suspected instances of bullying on another person

- To avoid any behaviour which could be understood by others as bullying: (e.g. giving 'dirty looks', calling names, spreading rumours, teasing, threatening);
- To practice self-control and avoid reacting to negative attitudes or behaviours of other in an aggressive way.

St John the Baptist's College's Response to Bullying:

All staff (teaching and non-teaching) has the responsibility to report bullying incidents. Bullying incidents will be dealt with by the Form Teacher, Year Head, Vice Principal or Principal. Form Teachers may be involved at the initial stage and will continue to have a supportive role. All allegations of bullying will be taken seriously and the responses can include some or all of the following:

If bullying is reported to a member of staff by a pupil or parent or a serious bullying problem is suspected by a member of staff, the following procedures will be followed:

- The Year Head or Vice-Principal will carry out an investigation into the matter. During this process the Principal will be aware of the issue
- When the process is complete, the Year Head or Vice Principal will formally advise the Principal
- It is important that the target and the person presenting bullying behaviour receive all the support they need

Guidelines for clarifying an Alleged Instance of Bullying Behaviour:

Remember, the main aim of any intervention is to **RESPOND** to the bullying that is taking place, **RESOLVE** the concern and **RESTORE** the well-being of all those involved (NIABF).

All staff to be vigilant, monitor supervise and observe at all times.

Form Teacher:

The Form Teacher may have a very important role to play in the initial investigative process. He or she knows the pupil better than anyone else in the school. If the Form Teacher is dealing with the incident initially it is his or her responsibility to:

- Have a meeting with the pupil concerned to determine the seriousness of the incident
- Listen sympathetically and provide reassurance
- Record details in writing - dates, times, the type of bullying, the name of any pupil who witnessed what was happening, where the incidents occurred (in the classroom, on the corridor, outside)
- Inform the Year Head of the incident and provide him or her with a written report.

Year Head or Vice Principal:

When the Year Head or Vice Principal receives details of the incident he or she is required to

- Meet with the pupils (target, witnesses, alleged person presenting bullying behaviour) connected with the incident
- Record details in writing - dates, times, the type of bullying, the name of any pupil who witnessed what was happening, where the incidents occurred (in the classroom, on the corridor, outside)
- Determine if there is a case of bullying

- Contact both sets of parents explaining what has been happening and how the incident will be dealt with
- Arrange meeting with the parents of the target and person presenting bullying behaviour
- Ensure the Principal is informed of the details of the incident
- Organise the meeting at a time when the Vice Principal or Principal can be present
- Determine the appropriate disciplinary action agreed with the Vice Principal or Principal
- Inform relevant staff of outcomes and disciplinary action taken

All written internal reports of bullying will be kept securely in school.

Outcome of the Investigation:

Whenever the investigation has concluded and it has been established that bullying has taken place the response can include some or all of the following:

- The person presenting bullying behavior will have to explain their behaviour to the Year Head, Vice Principal or Principal
- The reasons for their behaviour will be recorded
- Their parents will be informed of the incident and invited into the school for a meeting
- The person presenting bullying behavior will have to apologise to the target
- The target's possessions will have to be replaced or repaired if damaged
- Depending on the seriousness of the bullying incident one or more of the sanctions will be applied
- Placed on detention after school or lunchtime
- Placed on Behaviour Report
- Remain in the care of their Form Teacher or Year Tutor for an agreed period of time and school work is provided
- Moved to a different Form Class if the target is in the same class
- Suspended from school
- Permanently excluded from school
- Peer support
- School mediation/Group Support
- Interventions from NIABF

Support Provided for Target and Person Presenting Bullying Behaviour:

Target:

The target should be reassured that they are not in any way to blame. Support and protection should be provided and agreement reached with them on an appropriate course of action. Bullying, especially when serious or prolonged, can have lasting emotional and psychological ill-effects and a distressed pupil will be offered support from staff. In serious cases, it will be necessary to offer counselling to the target.

Person presenting bullying behavior:

As well as ensuring that pupils who are bullying are dealt with in accordance with St John the Baptist's College Behaviour Policy and Procedures, it will be necessary to work with these pupils to try to help them change their unacceptable behaviour. Bullying behaviour should be treated in the same way as other forms of behavioural

difficulties. It is important that the person presenting bullying behavior is spoken to calmly and sensitively and asked to think about and talk about the implications of their behaviour for the pupil who they had targeted. It is also important to speak to his/her parents to help identify any relevant background information and secure their support in this situation. The person presenting bullying behavior may also need counselling.

IT IS IMPORTANT THAT THE TARGET AND THE PERSON PRESENTING BULLYING BEHAVIOUR RECEIVE ALL THE SUPPORT THEY NEED, BOTH NEED OUR HELP

Use of External/Support Agencies:

We acknowledge the importance of a range of external support agencies in promoting and supporting pastoral care within the school but also the importance of ensuring that such agencies adhere to the values and ethos of our school.

Current external/support agencies include:

- Social Services and LAC Team
- School Counsellor
- CAPS and YPP
- PPDS
- NSPCC
- PSNI
- STEPS Programme
- EWO Service
- Behaviour Support Team
- Early Intervention & Support
- NICRAO
- Barnardos

Related Whole School Policies:

This policy is set within the broader school context of Pastoral Care and as such should be implemented in conjunction with the following school policies:

- Pastoral Care Policy
- Drugs Education Policy
- Positive Behaviour Policy
- Inclusion Policy
- RSE Policy
- Safeguarding Policy
- ICT and Internet Policy
- SEN Policy

These policies are available from the school website

www.stjohnthebaptistcollege.com or the school office on request.

Monitoring and evaluation

The effectiveness of the policy will be measured by:

- A reduction in the number of bullying behaviours at various levels
- A reduction in the number of pupils referred to external agencies
- A reduction in suspension

Review

Mrs McCabe, Designated Teacher, is responsible for monitoring, evaluating and reviewing the implementation of the Anti-Bullying Policy. She will update the Policy and Procedures in light of any further guidance and legislation as necessary and review it annually (or in light of bullying incident). This will be done in consultation with the governors, SMT, staff, students and parents.

On-going evaluation will ensure the effectiveness of the Policy.

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HOW DO PARENTS MAKE SCHOOL AWARE OF ISSUE



**PARENT CONTACTS SCHOOL
FORM TEACHER/YEAR HEAD**



FORM TEACHER/YEAR HEAD WILL CLARIFY AGGLEGED INCIDENT



CONTACT PARENT