

St John Fisher Catholic High School



ANTI-BULLYING POLICY

Adopted by Governing Board: July 2017

Review date: July 2018

LEARNING TOGETHER AS A COMMUNITY IN CHRIST

GUIDING PRINCIPLES

At St John Fisher Catholic High School we believe that each individual is made in God's image and likeness. All members of our school community are encouraged to value each person as a unique creation of God and are expected to treat each other with dignity, respect and tolerance. With this in mind, bullying is not tolerated in any shape or form. Bullying is wrong and is incompatible with our ethos and mission statement. Our first priority is the safety and welfare of our pupils and other members of the school community. We are committed to preventing bullying in all its forms from taking place in St John Fisher.

All pupils have the right to feel safe in school. We encourage all members of the school community to take responsibility for ensuring their actions do not make others feel unsafe. We expect all teaching and non-teaching staff to relate to pupils and each other in a way that models positive behaviour.

Unfortunately, bullying does occasionally take place in schools. When it happens in St John Fisher Catholic High School, it is essential that we respond in an effective manner so as to bring it to an end. Children bully others for a number of reasons.

Although this policy focuses on bullying within the pupil body, the school acknowledges that other forms of bullying may take place, including 'adult to child' bullying and 'child to adult' bullying. In addition to this there may also be occasions of bullying of staff by parents/guardians. Bullying in any form is unacceptable and will be taken seriously. Members of staff suffering from or concerned about bullying should contact their line manager or professional association for support and advice.

AIMS

- To provide a safe, caring and protective environment for all members of the school community.
- For all members of the school community to recognise that bullying is unacceptable, anti-social behaviour and to actively work together to challenge it.

- To ensure that all members of the school community have a clear understanding of what constitutes bullying, the support available for victims of bullying and the consequences for the perpetrator.
- To ensure that we all feel valued and respected.
- To further develop the self-esteem, self-confidence and emotional resilience of all pupils.
- To establish and maintain effective anti-bullying procedures.
- To encourage all pupils to report any bullying concerns to a member of staff. Being a bystander is not acceptable.
- To continue to work in partnership with parents/guardians and external agencies to eradicate bullying.

This policy should be read in conjunction with the following SJF policies:

- Behaviour for Learning
- Acceptable use
- Safeguarding & Child Protection
- E-safety

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. (DfE – Preventing & tackling bullying 2014). At St John Fisher Catholic High School, we believe that bullying behaviour is repeated behaviour that is intended to cause distress, embarrassment, harm or discomfort to others. Bullying is often motivated by prejudice against particular groups, for example on grounds of race, religion, appearance or health conditions, gender, sexual orientation and those children with a special educational need or disability.

The main types of bullying are:

- **Physical** – hitting, kicking, pushing, punching or any use of violence
- **Verbal** – derogatory name calling, making threats, swearing, mimicry/ridicule, taunting

- **Emotional** – tormenting, spreading malicious rumours, non-verbal intimidation, deliberate social exclusion
- **Cyber** – text messages, social media (Facebook, Snapchat, Instagram etc), sexting

IDENTIFICATION

Signs & symptoms – what to look for.

Children may indicate signs or behaviours that they are being bullied. Signs of bullying can be variable and depend on the individual. Staff are asked to be proactive in gathering intelligence about issues between pupils which might provoke conflict and develop strategies to prevent bullying occurring in the first place. Staff are also encouraged to be vigilant and to look for noticeable changes in a child's behaviours which may indicate bullying. These may include:

- Unusual attendance and/or punctuality patterns and an unwillingness to attend school.
- Regular complaints of feeling unwell and/or wanting to leave school early.
- Becoming withdrawn, isolated or disengaged.
- Displaying excessive anxiety.
- Money/possessions going missing.
- Damage to personal property, e.g. clothing, bag, books etc.
- Unexplained physical injuries.
- Sudden or gradual lack of interest/effort in school, often resulting in limited progress being made.
- Travelling to and from school by a different route or reluctance to travel to school by regular means.
- Sudden loss of self-esteem or confidence.
- Sudden loss of appetite and/or stops eating in school.
- Sudden change in established behaviour patterns/habits.

PREVENTION

It is the shared responsibility of all members of staff in school to contribute to the prevention of bullying and to provide an effective response should bullying occur. Pupils will be encouraged to always inform a member of staff whenever they suspect bullying may be occurring. This is not 'telling tales', it is acting in a mature and responsible manner. Parents/guardians will also be encouraged to contact school if they have any concerns about bullying.

The school will use the following range of strategies to help prevent bullying:

- Regular discussion of bullying related matters in staff briefings, Senior Pastoral Group meetings and Year Team meetings.
- Regular discussion in School Council meetings.
- Appropriate continued professional development and training for all staff.
- Pupil voice survey to establish views on bullying.
- Induction programme for incoming year 7 intake and pupils involved in mid-year transfers.
- Prefect duty system in school and on school buses.
- SLT, teaching and non-teaching staff on duty before and after school, at break and lunchtimes.
- Curriculum input during lessons, assemblies, form time and as part of the school's SMSC and PSHE&C programmes.
- Monitoring of pupils' on-line activity via Impero system.
- Participation in local and national initiatives such as Anti-Bullying Week in November.
- Safer Internet Day to highlight the issues around E-safety and appropriate use of social media websites.
- Advice in pupil diaries/planners and on school website.
- Use of CCTV in school.

RESPONDING

If a bullying incident is reported to or witnessed by a member of staff it should be dealt with promptly and effectively. All concerns about bullying will be taken seriously and investigated thoroughly in order to establish the facts. The intention is to always offer a proactive, sympathetic and supportive response, personalised to the particular needs of the pupil involved. Following the reporting or witnessing of a suspected bullying incident, the following procedure should be followed:

- The staff member who is approached by a pupil should offer reassurance that the matter will be dealt with swiftly and sensitively. At this point accurate notes should be recorded then passed onto the Form Tutor (FT) or Head of Year (HOY). The member of staff should ensure that the pupil is safe.
- HOY and/or FT to carry out a thorough investigation by interviewing as quickly as possible the pupils involved. Witness statements will be collected as required.
- Where appropriate, SLT may become involved in the investigation.
- Once a conclusion has been reached and it has been established that bullying has taken place, parents/guardians and staff should be informed.
- A period of close monitoring by staff should be triggered with follow up meetings arranged for the pupil subjected to bullying.

- Appropriate support will be provided for the victim of bullying. This will involve, where appropriate, external agencies.

Further guidance for staff on how to respond to bullying can be found in Appendix 1.

Whenever it is deemed necessary to issue sanctions to the pupil who acted in a bullying way, these will be applied fairly and consistently and should be reasonable and proportionate and in line with the school's behaviour policy. Depending on the seriousness of the bullying incident(s), sanctions issued may include:

- Isolation at break/lunch for a limited period of time
- Detention
- Withdrawal from school trips
- Monitoring by a pastoral leader
- Change of form group or class
- Involvement of external agencies
- Internal exclusion
- Fixed term exclusion

In addition to appropriate sanctions being applied, it is important that the pupil who exhibited bullying behaviour is educated to enable them to recognise that their anti-social behaviour is unacceptable and to behave in a more acceptable manner in order to prevent further bullying incidents. There will always be an emphasis on reconciliation.

ADVICE FOR PARENTS/GUARDIANS

Bullying behaviour includes:

- name calling and nasty teasing
- threats and extortion
- physical violence
- damage to belongings
- leaving pupils out of social activities deliberately and frequently
- spreading malicious rumours

Parents/guardians and families have an important part to play in helping schools deal with bullying. Discourage your child from using bullying behaviour at home or elsewhere. Show how to resolve difficult situations without using violence or aggression.

Watch out for signs that your child is being bullied, or is bullying others. Parents/guardians and families are often the first to detect symptoms of bullying, though school staff may first suspect that a child has been bullied. Common symptoms include headaches, stomach aches, anxiety and irritability. It can be helpful to ask questions about progress and friends at school; how break times and lunchtimes are spent; and whether your child is facing problems or difficulties at school. Don't dismiss negative signs. Contact the school immediately if you are worried.

If your child has been bullied;

- calmly talk to your child about it
- make a note of what your child says - particularly who was said to be involved; how often the bullying has occurred; where it happened and what has happened
- reassure your child that telling you about the bullying was the right thing to do
- explain that any further incidents should be reported to a teacher immediately
- contact school to speak to your child's Form Tutor (FT) or Head of Year (HOY)
- explain to the FT or HOY the problems your child is experiencing

Talking to teachers about bullying

- try to stay calm - bear in mind that the FT or HOY may have no idea that your child is being bullied or may have heard conflicting accounts of an incident
- be as specific as possible about what your child says has happened - give dates, places and names of other children involved
- make a note of what action the school intends to take
- ask if there is anything you can do to help your child or the school
- stay in touch with the school - let them know if things improve as well as if problems continue

If your child is bullying other children:

Many children may be involved in bullying other pupils at some time or other. Often parents/guardians are not aware. Children sometimes bully others because:

- they don't know it is wrong
- they are copying older brothers or sisters or other people in the family they admire

- they haven't learnt other, better ways of mixing with their school friends
- their friends encourage them to bully
- they are going through a difficult time and are acting out aggressive feelings

To stop your child bullying others:

- talk to your child, explaining that bullying is unacceptable and makes others unhappy
- discourage other members of your family from bullying behaviour or from using aggression or force to get what they want
- show your child how to join in with other children without bullying
- make an appointment to see your child's FT or HOY; explain to the teacher the problems your child is experiencing; discuss with the FT or HOY how you and the school can stop them bullying others
- regularly check with your child how things are going at school
- give your child lots of praise and encouragement when they are co-operative or kind to other people

BULLYING OUTSIDE SCHOOL PREMISES

This policy applies not only on the school premises but also on the journey to and from school, on all educational visits including residentials, extra-curricular activities and on the way to and from activities off site during the school day.

RECORDING & REPORTING

Pupils and parents/guardians are encouraged to report bullying to any member of staff. Incidents are, in the first instance, referred to the pupil's FT or HOY to be investigated.

All bullying incidents will be recorded on SIMS and in the bullying register. It is the responsibility of the HOY to ensure incidents are recorded. Termly updates of bullying related matters are provided for the Governing Body by the Deputy Head teacher. Bullying of a homophobic or racist nature will be reported to Wigan Local Authority.

MONITORING & REVIEW

The effectiveness of the anti-bullying policy will be monitored through:

- School Council feedback
- Pupil voice surveys
- Detailed analysis of bullying registers
- Governing Body committee meetings

RESPONDING TO A COMPLAINT FROM A PARENT/GUARDIAN

In the first instance, parents/guardians should contact their child's Form Tutor in an attempt to resolve a bullying concern. Alternatively, a HOY or member of the senior leadership team may be contacted. The school has a complaints procedure which can be found on the school website.

APPENDIX 1

ADVICE FOR STAFF – WHAT TO DO IF A PUPIL TELLS YOU THEY ARE BEING BULLIED

DO:

- listen, allowing them to tell the story in their own words
- not dismiss the experience as part of growing up
- take the incident seriously
- take appropriate action as soon as possible, referring to relevant members of staff
- not react emotionally, remain calm and reassure the pupil that they are not being weak or foolish
- offer concrete advice, help and support
- make it plain to the bully that you disapprove
- encourage the bully to see the victim's point of view
- punish the bully if necessary using an appropriate sanction
- inform people as necessary as identified in the Anti-Bullying Policy

DON'T:

- be over protective
- assume that the bully is thoroughly bad
- keep the whole incident secret because you have dealt with it
- try to hide the incident from the parents of the victim or the bully.