

St. Joseph's Catholic School & Sixth Form Centre
Ysgol Gatholig San Joseff

Anti-Bullying Policy



Anti-Bullying Policy agreed by Governors:

Signed by Chair:

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'P. Wellingham', is placed over a light grey rectangular background.

Date: 13/03/2024

Mission

I have come that they might have life, and have it to the full. (John 10:10)

Our mission is founded on Jesus's call to fullness of life and it is guided by the four purposes of our curriculum.

**ambitious,
capable learners**
who are ready to
learn throughout
their lives, making
the most of their
gifts and talents.

**healthy, confident
individuals** who
are ready and
committed to lead
fulfilling lives as
valued members
of society.



**enterprising,
creative
contributors** who
are ready to
answer their
vocations and play
a full part in life
and work.

**ethical, informed
citizens** who
understand and
appreciate their
call to stewardship
and are ready to
be citizens of
Wales and the
world.

This policy should be seen as an extension of our Behaviour for Learning Policy, an integral part of the curriculum, providing our young people with an expression of our school's values and an explicit reference point for their moral, social and practical development. Our vision is for everyone in our community to:

- follow the Gospel values of compassion, generosity, empathy, tolerance, and concern for others and for the school environment;
- acknowledge the dignity of every person they meet in school as made in the image of God;
- seek and give forgiveness and to become peace makers;

- appreciate diversity and to look after the most vulnerable members of the school community.

Introduction

In accordance with Jesus's call to fullness of life, our stance on anti-bullying recognises the United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child, particularly the following articles:

Article 2 (Non-discrimination)

The Convention applies to every child without discrimination, whatever their ethnicity, gender, religion, language, abilities or any other status, whatever they think or say, whatever their family background;

Article 3 (Best interests of the child)

The best interests of the child must be a top priority in all decisions and actions that affect children;

Article 4 (Implementation of the Convention)

Governments must do all they can to make sure every child can enjoy their rights by creating systems and passing laws that promote and protect children's rights;

Article 12 (Respect for the views of the child)

Every child has the right to express their views, feelings and wishes in all matters affecting them, and to have their views considered and taken seriously. This right applies at all times, for example during immigration proceedings, housing decisions or the child's day-to-day home life;

Article 19 (Protection from violence, abuse and neglect)

Governments must do all they can to ensure that children are protected from all forms of violence, abuse, neglect and bad treatment by their parents or anyone else who looks after them;

Article 28 (Right to education)

Every child has the right to an education. Primary education must be free and different forms of secondary education must be available to every child. Discipline in schools must respect children's dignity and their rights. Richer countries must help poorer countries achieve this;

Article 29 (Goals of education)

Education must develop every child's personality, talents and abilities to the full. It must encourage the child's respect for human rights, as well as respect for their parents, their own and other cultures, and the environment;

Article 39 (Recovery from trauma and reintegration)

Children who have experienced neglect, abuse, exploitation, torture or who are victims of war must receive special support to help them recover their health, dignity, self-respect and social life; and

Article 40 (Juvenile justice)

A child accused or guilty of breaking the law must be treated with dignity and respect.

Aims

1. This policy aims to help create a positive environment where learners are able to learn without fear of bullying and/or harassment, in line with the school's core values. The policy outlines what the school will do to prevent bullying and procedures to be applied when identified. The policy **has been drawn up with the involvement of the whole school community and** should be read, in conjunction with the Behaviour for Learning policy.
2. Bullying on whatever grounds is totally unacceptable and something that St Joseph's Catholic School and Sixth Form Centre School will not tolerate. Bullying is in direct conflict with the school's Catholic Christian ethos.

Definitions

There is no legal definition of bullying. However, at St Joseph's, the act of bullying is seen as behaviour that is:

- deliberately hurtful (physically or emotionally);
- repeated or follows a pattern;
- often aimed at certain groups, for example because of race, religion, gender or sexual orientation;
- often based on someone's appearance;
- difficult for victims to defend themselves against.

Bullying takes many forms and can include

- physical bullying, e.g. hitting, pushing, pinching, kicking;
- verbal bullying, such as teasing, making threats and/or name-calling;
- sexist or sexual bullying, e.g. harassment, groping, 'upskirting', suggestive sexual comments or innuendo, the use of humiliating sexist language;
- cyber-bullying - bullying via mobile phone or online (for example via email, and often using forms of social media networks);
- being threatened or forced to do things, e.g. hand over money;
- being ignored or left out.

Often perpetrators of these behaviours may not consider their actions to be 'bullying'. Nevertheless, the school takes incidents of bullying very seriously. It is recognised that these actions may not always take place within the school grounds and/or during the school day. However, any learner of the school is subject to sanctions, which may include police intervention.

When is it not bullying?

The following are examples of unacceptable behaviour but are not examples of bullying:

- a disagreement or falling out;
- an argument or one-off fight;
- relationship issues where children or young people need to learn how to get along better;

- someone being 'nasty' with unkind or disrespectful words or action.

Of course, all unacceptable behaviour must be challenged, whether bullying or not.

This anti-behaviour policy is closely related to our Behaviour for Learning policy.

As outlined there, all our learners are expected to:

- Behave in an orderly, calm and safe manner;
- Wear the correct uniform at all times;
- Show respect to all members of the school community;
- Arrive to school and lessons on time, with the correct equipment;
- In lessons, behave in a manner which allows everyone to learn;
- Move quietly and calmly around the school;
- Treat the school buildings and school property with respect;
- Follow sanctions when given without dispute/conflict; and
- Refrain from behaving in a way that presents the school in a negative way to others.

All cases of alleged bullying should be reported to a member of staff, usually the form tutor or the class teacher. The teacher should deal with the incident in accordance with the Behaviour for Learning policy, but they must also report it as a bullying incident to the relevant Head of Year, who will be able to track and monitor behaviours for any patterns or repetitions.

Preventing, identifying and responding to bullying

At St Joseph's, we will seek to:

- Work with staff and outside agencies to identify and record different forms of bullying (Appendix 1: BIF);
- Actively provide systematic opportunities to develop learners' social and emotional skills, including their resilience;
- Promptly investigate alleged incidents of bullying;
- Work with victims of bullying to offer professional and confidential support;
- Utilise opportunities for addressing bullying through the curriculum, displays, peer support and the School Council;
- Train all staff including lunchtime staff and learning coaches, teaching assistants and support staff to identify bullying and follow school policy and procedures on bullying. Training needs will be reviewed annually for all members of staff;
- Actively create "safe spaces" for vulnerable children and young people;
- Where appropriate use trained mediators (e.g. Police Schools Liaison Officers) in achieving a suitable resolution;
- Continuously review and update policy in line with best practice and findings; and
- Contact relevant outside agencies where appropriate.

We will seek to involve learners by:

- Regularly canvassing learners' views on the extent and nature of bullying;
- Ensuring learners know how to express worries and anxieties about bullying;
- Ensuring all learners are aware of the range of sanctions that may be applied against those engaging in bullying;
- Involving learners in anti-bullying campaigns in schools;
- Offering support to learners who have been bullied; and
- Working with learners who have been bullied in order to address the problems they have.

We will seek to work closely with families to:

- Ensure that parents and carers know whom to contact if they are worried about bullying;
- Ensure parents and carers know about our policy by publicising it on the school website and giving guidance on how to use it effectively;
- Ensure parents and carers know where to access independent advice about bullying; and
- Work with parents, carers and the local community to address issues beyond the school gates that give rise to bullying.

Responsibilities

The success of the policy is reliant on the consistent approach undertaken by staff in response to alleged bullying and an acceptance by the whole school community, that bullying is not tolerated and understands the steps that will be taken to both prevent and respond to bullying.

It is the responsibility of:

- School Governors to take a lead role in monitoring and reviewing this policy;
- Teaching and support staff to read this policy and implement it accordingly;
- The Headteacher to communicate the policy to the school community;
- Learners to abide by the policy;
- Parents and carers to cooperate with the school policy.

Anti-bullying staged approach to sanctions and support

As with the Behaviour for Learning policy, the school makes use of a graduated response to managing bullying (see Appendix 2). This approach follows a six-stage model to ensure that sanctions for bullying are applied fairly and consistently. Standardised letters to accompany each stage are in place to support parents and carers (Appendix 3);

Where a learner has reached stage 5 of the graduated response, the school will have to consider whether to refer the learner to the local authority to seek an alternative to permanent exclusion from the school.

Support for victims of bullying

The pastoral team will check at regular intervals on the welfare of learner who is the victim of bullying. This may be on a more regular basis within the first two weeks on an incident being reported. However, our intention is to ensure that any victim of bullying receives the necessary support to ensure they feel safe at school.

While the graduated response highlights the sanctions for perpetrators of bullying, we do also rely on learners, parents and carers to report incidents and/or any repetition of incidents. It is important to understand that the school cannot take action if it is not made aware.

Staff training

All staff will be provided with training on managing incidents of bullying as part of annual safeguarding training. Additional training will be provided to key pastoral staff who have a defined role in managing incidents of bullying (in terms of working closely with the victim and perpetrator).

Individual advice, support and strategies to support staff, at all levels, is provided on an ongoing basis by Heads of Year and the Senior Leadership Team.

APPENDIX 2

Graduated Response to Incidents of Bullying

The following stages will apply where an investigation concludes that alleged bullying did take place. The graduated response is designed to support incidents of bullying and/or persistent incidents. In addition to being issued with warnings (informal and formal), it may be necessary to issue additional sanctions (e.g. via ClassCharts). Additionally, the school reserves the right to escalate the response for extreme incidents in line with the Welsh Government Guidance on 'Exclusion from Schools and PRU' (255/2019).

Stage 1: Awareness Meeting

Learner identified as a perpetrator of bullying behaviours meets with their **Head of Year**. Supportive strategies will be shared with the learner to help modify behaviours. The incident is logged on the central register and discussed along with perceived involvement and behaviours displayed. Families informed as appropriate by telephone, email or text.

Stage 2: Informal Warning

Further incident as a perpetrator of bullying behaviours towards the same victim or another learner. The incident is logged and the learner has a further meeting with their **Head of Year**. The incident is discussed along with perceived involvement, behaviours displayed and suggested resolution to the situation. Previously shared supportive strategies will be reinforced to help modify behaviours. An informal warning letter is issued and families are invited to meet with the child's Head of Year. This warning will remain on the learner's file for a period of **six months** from the date of issue. However, it will no longer be considered beyond this point, providing there are no further incidents.

Stage 3: Formal Warning

Further or ongoing incidents of bullying, or a number of reported incidents with different victims. The incident is logged. A formal warning letter is issued. The learner and his/her family are invited to a meeting with the **Deputy Head**. A formal plan will be devised and monitored to help support the learner to change their behaviours. For more serious cases, where considering the entire behaviour of a learner the Deputy Head has the discretion to issue a Formal Warning without issuing an informal warning. A formal warning will last for a minimum of **twelve months** from the date of issue. However, it will no longer be considered beyond this point, providing there are no further incidents.

Stage 4: Leadership Team Conduct Panel

Continued bullying of a learner or a number of learners. The incident is investigated and logged. The perpetrator and his/her family will be required to attend a Leadership Team Conduct Panel, chaired by the **Headteacher**, where a suggested way forward will be discussed along with potential consequences should bullying

behaviours continue. A formal plan will be issued and/or updated. This panel may vary the plan and or extend the period of the Formal Warning.

Stage 5: Governors Conduct Panel

Continued bullying of a learner or a number of learners. The incident is logged. The perpetrator and his/her family will be required to attend a **Governors Conduct Panel**. The family and learner are warned that the learner is at risk of permanent exclusion from school. A suggested way forward will be discussed along with potential consequences should bullying type behaviours continue. A formal plan will be issued or updated. This panel may vary the plan and or extend the period of the Formal Warning. The learner and his/her family will be made aware that this is the final warning and any further incident is likely to result in a permanent exclusion, in line with 1.1.3 of the 'Exclusion from Schools and PRU' (255/2019).

Stage 6: Permanent Exclusion

Sanctions and support will be offered/issued on a case-by-case basis and will be linked to the individual circumstances of the incident and the needs of the victim and the actions of the perpetrator.