

# St Joseph's

## Catholic Primary School

Work hard, love tenderly, walk humbly: trusting in God.



### Anti-Bullying Policy

**Head Teacher: Mrs J. Burgess**

**Chair of Governors: Mrs C. Horsley**

| Revision History       |         |   |        |          |          |
|------------------------|---------|---|--------|----------|----------|
| Name                   | Version | Reason for change   | Status | Date     | Review   |
| SLT                    | 1.1     | Updated in light of new behaviour curriculum                  | Final  | Sept '23 | Sept '24 |
| Senior Leadership Team | 1.0     | New format – reviewed by staff, governors, parents and pupils | Final  | Jan '23  | Jan' 24  |

Our Behaviour Policy and Anti-Bullying policies are closely aligned and aspects will be cross-referenced.

## **Anti-bullying Policy**

### **Our Principles**

Work hard, love tenderly, walk humbly; trusting in God

### **At St. Joseph's we strive to:**

- Work together as a one, in our trust family within the Diocese of Hexham and Newcastle, to ensure the best possible Catholic education for our young people;
- Provide an exciting and engaging curriculum with Christ at the centre and a strong sense of Catholic identity meeting the spiritual needs of all;
- Be a welcoming, compassionate and caring community, where all are equally loved, celebrated and valued for who they are;
- Be an inspiring, motivational and challenging educational community committed to ensuring children thrive in all areas of their development;
- Work in partnership with our wider local community and stakeholders to nurture the whole child to develop children's knowledge of their important role in our society
- Live out the social teaching of the Church, and thereby promote community cohesion.

### **Aim of the policy**

This policy describes the anti-bullying strategies we use at our school to ensure that every child can play and learn without fear of intimidation from others. This policy links to our Behaviour Policy and Safeguarding and Child Protection Policy 2023-2024.

### **Definition of bullying**

Bullying is an imbalance of power. One, or a group of individuals, intimidating another by threatening, physically or emotionally hurting them. It is usually repeated, and usually deliberate, but the intention and perception of bullying can be different in every case.

Bullying can be:

- Physical;
- Verbal;
- Online.

The root of the bullying can, for example, be:

- Racist;
- Sexist;
- Homophobic.

### **Awareness Raising**

St Joseph's Catholic Primary School have regular anti-bullying awareness raising events which include assemblies, classroom friendship workshops, posters and displays. All children in the school are aware that bullying is not acceptable and that there is a difference between a fall out and bullying. The Ethos Ambassadors are trained and supported by the school. School adopts a graduated approach using the CPOMS recording system to log friendship/conflict issues amongst pupils, or any bullying incidents.

### **Child on Child Abuse**

Child on Child Abuse – including harmful sexual behaviour - taken from Keeping Children Safe in Education is taken very seriously and all staff recognise that children are capable of abusing their peers.

Education settings are an important part of the inter-agency framework not only in terms of evaluating and referring concerns to Children's Services and the Police, but also in the assessment and management of risk that the child or young person may pose to themselves and others in the education setting.

If one child or young person causes harm to another, this should not necessarily be dealt with as abuse. When considering whether behaviour is abusive, it is important to consider whether there is a large

difference in power (for example age, size, ability, development) between the young people concerned; or whether, the perpetrator has repeatedly tried to harm one or more other children; or whether there are concerns about the intention of the alleged perpetrator.

In this school child on child abuse will not be tolerated or passed off as 'joking around', 'banter', 'just having a laugh' or 'part of growing up'. Child on child abuse can be such that girls are more likely victims and boys, perpetrators.

Child on child abuse may take different forms:

- Physical abuse such as hitting, kicking, shaking, biting, hair pulling, or otherwise causing physical harm;
- Sexting;
- Initiating/hazing type violence and rituals.

The following steps are taken in school to minimise these risks:

- Provide a developmentally appropriate RHE curriculum which develops students understanding of acceptable behaviour and keeping themselves safe;
- Have systems in place for any student to raise concerns with staff, knowing that they will be listened to and valued;
- Robust risk assessments where appropriate.

Allegations of child on child abuse will be investigated by the headteacher/deputy headteacher.

The Sexual Behaviours Traffic Light Tool by the Brook Advisory Service helps professionals to assess and respond appropriately to sexualised behaviour. The traffic light tool can be found at

[www.brook.org.uk/our-work/the-sexual-behaviours-traffic-light-tool](http://www.brook.org.uk/our-work/the-sexual-behaviours-traffic-light-tool)

Guidance on responding to and managing sexting incidents can be found at:

[http://www.thegrid.org.uk/info/welfare/child\\_protection/reference/index.shtml#sex](http://www.thegrid.org.uk/info/welfare/child_protection/reference/index.shtml#sex)

Victims, perpetrators and any other child affected by child on child abuse will be supported within school as well as through the involvement of external specialists, if appropriate.

### **Developing an open/honest approach to tackling bullying**

We work hard to get the following messages over to children. If you think you are being bullied:

- ✓ Tell us the truth including any aspects you yourself may have been involved in (it gives us an honest picture);
- ✓ You will be listened to;
- ✓ We will help.

We will try to:

- ✓ find out the facts;
- ✓ stop any inappropriate behaviour;
- ✓ make you feel safe.

If children do not want to directly approach a member of staff, they have access to 'Worry Boxes' in each class – these can be used to share their concerns. They can also approach an Ethos Ambassador who will inform an adult straight away on their behalf.

Staff, including lunchtime supervisors have been trained by senior leaders in anti-bullying awareness, recognition and resolving skills.

## **Role of Parents**

Parents are advised to inform the school immediately if they suspect that their child is being bullied. The school will investigate and respond to findings and support as appropriate. If a child is guilty of bullying behaviour, the school would expect the support of parents in dealing with the problem. In such circumstances, parents will be made aware that the school is not only concerned with the victim but also that the bully realises such behaviour is not acceptable in a caring community. The process of dealing with a bullying situation will only be successful if parents are supportive.

## **Where bullying has been alleged, school will do the following:**

- React;
- Report;
- Reassure;
- Review.

After a report of bullying has been made, staff will react promptly.

Staff will thoroughly investigate the incident/s from all perspectives. Everyone potentially involved (included witnesses) will be spoken to. Staff will also be asked for comments at this stage as they constantly observe and monitor behaviour in classroom and during pupils' free time. This is to ensure we have the most accurate picture of the situation and that all pupils are given a fair hearing in order to determine the exact nature/extent of the issue. Bullying is a serious allegation and, as a result, our investigations will always be robust and far-reaching. Parents will be informed of school concerns and may be asked to come to a meeting to discuss the incident. A brief report will be produced detailing all responses, outcome and follow up actions.

There are two possible outcomes:

### *The situation **is not** considered bullying*

- Given all information, staff establish the issue constitutes a 'fall-out' where both sides have been involved and this is not deemed bullying. With this outcome, the inappropriate behaviour will be addressed with all pupils involved with a view to all parties recognising and taking responsibility for their actions and the impact these have.

### *The situation **is** considered bullying*

- Given all information, staff establish one or a group of individuals have intimidated another by threatening, physically or emotionally hurting them. This behaviour has been repeated.

The school view and parental view may differ but we will make every effort to explain how we have arrived at our decision.

## **Report and Reassure**

*If bullying is identified, staff must ensure the victim feels safe and supported.*

- Parents of both parties need to be informed to ensure that the issue is resolved successfully with ongoing support for both victim and perpetrator.

## **Working with the victim**

The victim will be offered support and be closely monitored by staff to ensure that they feel safe and that the issue does not occur again. They may be offered in-school counselling, if necessary/beneficial or be given access to named member of staff whom they have identified. This means on-going support is easily accessible.

## **Working with the perpetrator**

Sanctions will be applied; however, it is important to note that children who bully others often have their own issues. As well as any punitive measures, support should also be given to the perpetrator to ensure that their particular issues are resolved and they feel happy and can socialise without intimidating others.

They may also be offered counselling if necessary/beneficial or be given access to named member of staff whom they have identified. This means on-going support is easily accessible.

### **Working with the victim and perpetrator(s) together**

This option will be introduced as appropriate so pupils can acknowledge the impact of inappropriate behaviour and how the situation can be improved.

### **Review the situation**

The situation will be rigorously monitored to prevent any reoccurrence of bullying or inappropriate behaviour. This will involve all staff.

### **Monitoring and Recording**

In order to assess the effectiveness of an anti-bullying policy, evaluation procedures are in place.

- The Designated Safeguarding Leads (DSLs) review any reports of bullying.
- We use the following standards as a means of measuring performance:
  - Variation in number of reported incidents over a specific period with record of any increase since first instance,
  - Individual incident returns, including nil returns within specified periods for different age groups,
  - Monitoring the number of pupils' days lost which are suspected to, or alleged to, arise as a consequence of bullying,
  - Any marked improvement in academic performance which may be confidently regarded to have arisen due to the eradication of bullying behaviour,

We administer an anti-bullying pupil questionnaire, completed by pupils individually, during anti bullying week. Governors and senior leads have agreed to regular surveys of parents.

### **Complaints Procedure**

We strive to be a school where you trust us to support your child, especially in difficult situations. However, we appreciate that in order for us to do this, it may take further action. If you are not happy with the outcome of the initial investigation and / or outcomes, you should make an appointment to meet or discuss concerns with Miss Ryan, our deputy headteacher.

The deputy headteacher will continue the investigation and contact you, within 5 working days, to discuss her findings.

If you are still not satisfied with the outcome, please contact Mrs Burgess, Executive Headteacher.

Parents can also refer to the complaints policy via the school office or school website.

### **The Law**

Under the Education and Inspections Act 2006 all maintained schools must have measures in place to encourage good behaviour and prevent all types of bullying amongst pupils. These measures form part of the school behaviour policy and should be regularly communicated to all pupils, staff and parents.

The Malicious Communications Act 1988

The Protection from Harassment Act 1997

The Communications Act 2003

### **Further reading**

Other useful policies – all available on our school website:

Behaviour policy v1.1

Safeguarding and Child Protection Policy 2023-2024

Health and Safety policy

St. Joseph's Way behaviour curriculum