

**ST JOHN'S SCHOOL
AND SIXTH FORM COLLEGE
A CATHOLIC ACADEMY**

**ANTI-BULLYING
POLICY**



**Approved: 2015
To be reviewed: 2017**

ST JOHN'S ANTI-BULLYING POLICY

Our Mission Statement

We value each person as uniquely created in the image and the likeness of God. We support each person in her/his faith journey by creating opportunities to reflect on the world around us and our role within it.

We commit ourselves to ensure that the Gospel values of peace, justice, equality and respect for life find expression through our actions. Therefore, we will create a stimulating learning environment through a curriculum which responds to the interests and needs of learners, making effective use of new technologies.

We will respect and support one another, embracing diversity and celebrating each other's talents and success. We will create a safe and healthy community which is attentive to the needs of all.

March 2008

Statement of Intent

The staff and students of St John's strive to be a 'Learning Community Guided by Gospel Values'. A living sign of this community is seen in the way we behave towards each other. Therefore, we will aim to treat all members of our community with the tolerance, love and respect characteristic of people made in the image and likeness of God.

In carrying out this duty, we will seek opportunities to emphasise this message and put it into practice. Those with responsibility for assemblies, tutor group meetings, pastoral lessons, subject lessons, prayers and services will ensure that the school's anti-bullying values are highlighted.

We are committed to providing a caring, friendly and safe environment for all of our students so they can learn in a relaxed and secure atmosphere. Bullying of any kind is unacceptable at our school. If bullying does occur, all students should be able to

tell and know that incidents will be dealt with promptly and effectively. We are a *TELLING* school. This means that *anyone* who knows that bullying is happening is expected to tell the staff.

Why is it Important to Respond to Bullying?

Bullying hurts. No one deserves to be a victim of bullying. Everybody has the right to be treated with respect. Students who are bullying need to learn different ways of behaving.

We recognise our responsibility to respond promptly and effectively to issues of bullying.

Objectives of this Policy

- All governors, teaching and non-teaching staff, students and parents/carers should have an understanding of what bullying is.
- All governors and teaching and non-teaching staff should know what the school policy is on bullying, and follow it when bullying is reported.
- All students and parents should know what the school policy is on bullying, and what they should do if bullying arises.
- As a school we take bullying seriously. Students and parents should be assured that they will be supported when bullying is reported.
- Bullying will not be tolerated.

How we define Bullying

Bullying is the use of aggression with the intention of hurting another person. Bullying results in pain and distress to the victim.

Bullying can be:

- Emotional being unfriendly, excluding, tormenting (e.g. hiding books, threatening gestures)
- Physical pushing, kicking, hitting, punching or any use of violence
- Racist racial taunts, graffiti, gestures

- Sexual unwanted physical contact or sexually abusive comments
- Homophobic because of, or focussing on the issue of sexuality
- Verbal name-calling, sarcasm, spreading rumours, teasing
- Cyber All areas of internet, such as email & internet chat room misuse
Mobile threats by text messaging & calls
Misuse of associated technology, i.e. camera & video facilities

Signs and Symptoms

A child may indicate by signs or behaviour that he or she is being bullied. Adults should be aware of these possible signs and that they should investigate if a child:

- is frightened of walking to or from school
- doesn't want to go on the school / public bus
- begs to be driven to school
- changes their usual routine
- is unwilling to go to school (school phobic)
- begins to truant
- becomes withdrawn anxious, or lacking in confidence
- starts stammering
- attempts or threatens suicide or runs away
- cries themselves to sleep at night or has nightmares
- feels ill in the morning
- begins to do poorly in school work
- comes home with clothes torn or books damaged
- has possessions which are damaged or "go missing"
- asks for money or starts stealing money (to pay bully)
- has dinner or other monies continually "lost"
- has unexplained cuts or bruises
- comes home starving (money / lunch has been stolen)
- becomes aggressive, disruptive or unreasonable
- is bullying other children or siblings
- stops eating
- is frightened to say what's wrong
- gives improbable excuses for any of the above
- is afraid to use the internet or mobile phone
- is nervous & jumpy when a cyber message is received

These signs and behaviours could indicate other problems, but bullying should be considered a possibility and should be investigated

How we will support a zero tolerance approach to bullying in school:

- The supportive environment, which exists in school, encourages all members of our community to feel confident in speaking out about bullying.
- All students are part of a pastoral group and the role of their individual tutor is vital in all aspects of school life.
- All Head of Years have 'an open door policy' so that students can approach them easily about any difficulties they might be experiencing.
- Students also have access to 'the Student Welfare Team' – a team who specialise in supporting students who need additional help in school for a variety of reasons and who also offer 'an open door policy'.
- We continue to develop the Peer Mentors, which enables young people with concerns about bullying and other issues to talk to their peers in a supportive atmosphere.
- We continue to raise awareness of the issue of bullying through a variety of means (eg. Posters, leaflets, organising an anti-bullying campaign, assemblies, pastoral sessions, staff development etc)
- We continually raise the profile of other agencies working in school to combat bullying.

Procedures

1. Alleged bullying incidents can and should be reported to any member of staff. The member of staff must record the incident and pass it to the appropriate tutor and if necessary, the Head of Year, for the year group who will follow up and take appropriate action.
2. The tutor may deal with the incident themselves. In cases where the SLC is involved the incident may be dealt with by them independently or they may choose to refer on to the 'student welfare team' for additional support. This may involve a referral to the Student Welfare Coordinator to arrange for one of our external agencies to be involved.
3. In cases of persistent perceived bullying parents/carers will be informed and where necessary student/parent contracts may be drawn up to ensure that any inappropriate behaviour stops.
4. In cases of persistent inappropriate intimidating or threatening behaviour the police will be consulted.
5. **All** incidents of bullying behaviour or threats of bullying must be investigated and any bullying stopped quickly.
6. All parties will be offered on-going appropriate support. In appropriate cases individual student support plans will be drawn up detailing specific tailored support packages.

Outcomes

- The alleged bully may be asked to genuinely apologise i.e. letter/in person
- If possible, the students will be reconciled and mediation may be offered.
- In school sanctions may be used as a punishment:
 - Break detention
 - Lunchtime detention
 - After School detention
 - Isolation in school
- In persistent cases in-school sanctions may be used as above or
 - A Capernaum Centre
 - A fixed term exclusion
 - A permanent exclusion
- Student/Parenting contracts may be drawn up
- The police may be consulted and brought in if appropriate
- Referral to a suitable person in school or external agency for on-going supervision and support. i.e. Mentor, Behaviour support
- After the incident/incidents have been investigated and dealt with, each case will be monitored to ensure repeated bullying does not take place

-
- This policy will be accessible to all staff electronically and will be held in the staff shared area
 - This policy will be accessible to all students via the intranet
 - Parents/carers can request a hard copy at any time by contacting the school and can view the policy online via our school website.