



Anti-Bullying Policy

Date Adopted	September 2019
Procedure Review Period	Annually
Procedure Review Date	September 2020

1) Policy objectives:

- This policy outlines what St Patrick RC School does to prevent and tackle all forms of bullying.
- The policy aims to protect everyone connected with the school community from the effects of bullying.
- St Patrick's is committed to developing an anti-bullying culture, where the bullying of adults, children or young people is not tolerated, in any form.

2) Responsibilities

- It is the responsibility of:
 - the Head Teacher to communicate this policy to the school community and ensure that disciplinary measures are applied fairly, consistently and reasonably
 - governors to take a lead role in monitoring and reviewing this policy
 - all staff, governors, senior leaders, teaching and non-teaching staff, to support, uphold and implement this policy accordingly
 - parents/carers to support their children and work in partnership with the school
 - pupils to abide by the policy

3) What is bullying?

- Bullying can be defined as: “**behaviour by an individual or a group, repeated over time that intentionally hurts another individual either physically or emotionally**”. (DfE “Preventing and Tackling Bullying”, July 2017)
- Many experts say that bullying involves an imbalance of power between the perpetrator and the victim. This could involve perpetrators of bullying having control over the relationship, which makes it difficult for those they bully to defend themselves. The imbalance of power can manifest itself in several ways, it may be physical, psychological (knowing what upsets someone), derive from an intellectual imbalance, or by having access to the support of a group, or the capacity to socially isolate.
- Bullying can include name-calling, taunting, mocking, making offensive comments; kicking; hitting; taking belongings; producing offensive graffiti; gossiping; excluding people from groups and spreading hurtful or embarrassing rumours or information.
- This includes the same unacceptable behaviours expressed online, sometimes called online or cyberbullying. This is a different form of bullying and can happen at all times of the day, with a potentially bigger audience, and more accessories as people forward on content at a click. It has the potential to cause great harm.
- Bullying is recognised by the school as including peer-on-peer abuse (children hurting children), but also includes adults bullying children, children bullying adults and adults bullying adults. **It can cause severe and adverse effects on anyone's emotional well-being.**

4) School ethos

- St Patrick’s RC School recognises that all forms of bullying, especially if left unaddressed, can have a devastating effect on individuals; can create a barrier to learning and have serious consequences for mental wellbeing.
- By effectively preventing and tackling bullying, our school can help to create a safe and disciplined environment, where pupils are able to learn and fulfil their potential.
- **Our Community:**
 - celebrates differences
 - encourages respect
 - creates an inclusive environment
 - monitors and reviews our anti-bullying policy and practice on a regular basis
 - supports staff to promote positive relationships to help prevent bullying
 - recognises that some members of our community may be more vulnerable to bullying and its impact than others; this may include children with SEND. Being aware of this will help us to develop effective strategies to prevent bullying from happening and provide appropriate support, if required
 - will intervene by identifying and tackling bullying behaviour appropriately and promptly
 - ensures our pupils are aware that bullying concerns will be dealt with sensitively and effectively; that everyone should feel safe to learn and abide by the anti-bullying policy
 - requires all members of the community to work with the school to uphold the anti-bullying policy
 - recognises the potential impact of bullying on the wider family of those affected so will work in partnership with parents and carers regarding all reported bullying concerns and will seek to keep them informed at all stages
 - will deal promptly with grievances regarding the school’s response to bullying, in line with our complaints policy
 - seeks to learn from good anti-bullying practice elsewhere
 - utilises support from the Local Authority and other relevant organisations, as appropriate.

5) Responding to bullying

- The following steps will be taken when dealing with all incidents of bullying reported to the school.
 - If bullying is suspected or reported, the incident will be dealt with immediately by the member of staff who has been approached or witnessed the concern.
 - The school will provide appropriate and immediate support for the person being bullied – making sure they are not at risk of immediate harm and will involve them in any decision-making, as appropriate.
 - The Head Teacher, also the school’s Designated Safeguarding Lead (DSL) will interview all parties involved.
 - The DSL will be informed of all bullying issues where there are safeguarding concerns.
 - The school will speak with and inform other staff members, as appropriate.

- Where bullying has occurred, the school will ensure parents/carers are kept informed about situation and the action taken, as appropriate and in line with child protection and confidentiality policies.
- The school will sanction the perpetrator, in line with the school's behaviour policy, in order to make it clear that the behaviour is unacceptable and the school will not tolerate any form of bullying behaviour.
- The victim will be provided with appropriate support and be advised about how to report future incidents and whom they can go to for help.
- The school's DSL will monitor the situation, checking periodically, with the victim, that the situation remains resolved.
- If necessary, other agencies may be consulted or involved, such as the police, if a criminal offence has been committed, or other local services including early help or children's social care, if a child is believed to be suffering, or at risk of significant harm.
- Where the bullying of or by pupils takes place off school site or outside of normal school hours (including cyberbullying), the school will ensure that the concern is fully investigated. If required, the DSL will collaborate with other schools. Appropriate action will be taken, including providing support and implementing sanctions in school in accordance with this policy and the school's behaviour policy.
- A clear and precise account of bullying incidents will be recorded by the school in accordance with existing procedures. This will include recording appropriate details regarding decisions and actions taken.

Cyberbullying

- When responding to cyberbullying concerns, the school will:
 - act as soon as an incident has been reported or identified
 - provide appropriate support for the person who has been cyberbullied and work with the person who has carried out the bullying to help ensure that it does not happen again
 - encourage the person being bullied to keep any evidence (screenshots) of the bullying activity to assist any investigation
 - take all available steps to identify the person responsible. This may include:
 - looking at use of the school systems
 - identifying and interviewing possible witnesses.
 - contacting the service provider and the police, if necessary
 - work with the individuals and online service providers to prevent the incident from spreading and assist in removing offensive or upsetting material from circulation
This may include:
 - requesting a service provider remove content, if those involved are unable to be identified or if those involved refuse to or are unable to delete content
 - confiscating and searching (with the authority of the Head Teacher) pupils' electronic devices, such as mobile phones, in accordance with the law and

- the school's policy (see the school's Behaviour Policy) and deleting (with the authority of the Head Teacher) material that is offensive
 - requesting the deletion of locally-held content and content posted online if they contravene school behavioural policies
- ensure that sanctions are applied to the person responsible for the cyberbullying. The school will take steps to change the attitude and behaviour of the perpetrator, as well as ensuring access to any additional help that they may need
- inform the police if a criminal offence has been committed. If the mobile device has been confiscated by the school, in accordance with its behaviour policy, the phone will be handed over to the police, along with the offensive material
- provide information to staff and pupils regarding steps they can take to protect themselves online. This may include:
 - advising those targeted not to retaliate or reply;
 - providing advice on blocking or removing people from contact lists;
 - helping those involved to think carefully about what private information they may have in the public domain.

Supporting pupils

- *Pupils who have been bullied will be supported by:*
 - reassuring the pupil and providing continuous pastoral support
 - offering an immediate opportunity to discuss the experience with their teacher, the designated safeguarding lead, or a member of staff of their choice
 - being advised to keep a record of the bullying as evidence and discuss how respond to concerns and build resilience as appropriate
 - working towards restoring self-esteem and confidence
 - providing ongoing support; this may include: working and speaking with staff, offering formal counselling, engaging with parents and carers
 - where necessary, working with the wider community and local/national organisations to provide further or specialist advice and guidance; this could include support through Early Help or Specialist Children's Services, or support through the Children and Young People's Mental Health Service (CYPMHS).
- *Pupils who have perpetrated bullying will be helped by:*
 - discussing what happened, establishing the concern and the need to change
 - informing parents/carers to help change the attitude and behaviour of the child
 - providing appropriate education and support regarding their behaviour or actions
 - if online, requesting that content be removed and reporting accounts/content to service provider
 - sanctioning, in line with the school's behaviour policy; this may include official warnings, detentions, removal of privileges (including online access when encountering cyberbullying concerns), and fixed-term or permanent exclusions
 - where necessary, working with the wider community and local/national organisations to provide further or specialist advice and guidance; this may include involvement from the Police or referrals to Early Help, Specialist

Children's Services, or the Children and Young People's Mental Health Service (CYPMHS).

Supporting adults

- Our school takes measures to prevent and tackle bullying among pupils; however, it is equally important to recognise that bullying of adults, including staff and parents, whether by pupils, parents or other staff members, is unacceptable.
- *Adults who have been bullied, or affected by bullying, will be supported by:*
 - offering an immediate opportunity to discuss the concern with the designated safeguarding lead, a senior member of staff and/or the Head Teacher
 - advising them to keep a record of the bullying as evidence and discuss how to respond to concerns and build resilience, as appropriate
 - where the bullying takes place off the school site or outside of normal school hours (including online), the school will still investigate the concern and ensure that appropriate action is taken, in line with the schools' behaviour and discipline policy
 - reporting offensive or upsetting content and/or accounts to the service provider, where the bullying has occurred online, to the Local Authority, or to the police, if appropriate
 - reassuring and offering appropriate support
 - working with the wider community and local/national organisations to provide further or specialist advice and guidance
- *Adults who have perpetrated the bullying will be helped by:*
 - discussing what happened with a senior member of staff and/or the Head Teacher to establish the concern
 - establishing whether a legitimate grievance or concern has been raised and signposting to the school's official complaints procedures
 - if online, requesting that content be removed
 - instigating disciplinary, civil or legal action as appropriate or required

6) Preventing bullying

Environment

- The whole school community will:
 - create and support an inclusive environment which promotes a culture of mutual respect, consideration and care for others, which will be upheld by all

- recognise that bullying can be perpetrated or experienced by any member of the community, including adults and children (peer-on-peer abuse involving those under the age of 18 years)
- recognise the potential for children with SEN and disabilities to be disproportionately impacted by bullying and will implement additional pastoral support as required
- openly discuss differences between people that could motivate bullying
- challenge practice and language (including 'banter') which does not uphold the school values of tolerance, non-discrimination and respect towards others
- be encouraged to use technology, especially mobile phones and social media, positively and responsibly
- work with staff, the wider community and outside agencies to prevent and tackle concerns including all forms of prejudice-driven bullying
- actively create "safe spaces" for vulnerable children and young people
- celebrate success and achievements to promote and build a positive school ethos

Policy and Support

- The whole school community will:
 - provide a range of approaches for pupils, staff and parents/carers to access support and report concerns
 - regularly update and evaluate our practice to consider the developments of technology and provide up-to-date advice and education to all members of the community regarding positive online behaviour
 - take appropriate, proportionate and reasonable action, in line with existing school policies, for any bullying brought to the schools' attention, which involves or affects pupils, even when they are not on school premises
 - implement appropriate disciplinary sanctions; the consequences of bullying will reflect the seriousness of the incident, so that others see that bullying is wrong
 - use a variety of techniques to resolve the issues between those who bully, and those who have been bullied.

Education and Training

- The school community will:
 - train all staff, including: teaching staff, support staff (e.g. administration staff, lunchtime support staff and site support staff) and pastoral staff, to identify all forms of bullying and take appropriate action, following the school's policy and procedures, including recording and reporting incidents

- consider a range of opportunities and approaches for addressing bullying throughout the curriculum and other activities, such as: through displays, assemblies, peer support, the school/student council, etc.
- collaborate with other local educational settings as appropriate, and during key times of the year, for example during transition
- ensure anti-bullying has a high profile throughout the year, reinforced through key opportunities such as anti-bullying week
- provide systematic opportunities to develop pupils' social and emotional skills, including building their resilience and self-esteem.

7) Involvement of pupils

- *We will:*
 - involve pupils, to ensure that they understand the school's approach and are clear about the part they play in preventing bullying, by reporting bullying, be they the victim or witness. Children are clear about the need to report the use of discriminatory language
 - ensure that all pupils know how to express worries and anxieties about bullying
 - ensure that all pupils are aware of the range of sanctions which may be applied against those engaging in bullying
 - involve pupils in anti-bullying campaigns, events and projects in school
 - utilise pupil voice in providing pupil-led education and support
 - publicise the details of internal support, as well as external helplines and websites
 - offer support to pupils who have been bullied and to those who are bullying to address the problems they have.

8) Involvement and liaison with parents and carers

- *We will:*
 - ensure that parents are aware that the school does not tolerate any form of bullying and are clear about how the school will deal with bullying
 - make sure that key information about bullying (including policies and named points of contact – Pauline Burnside, Head Teacher or, in their absence, Patricia

Davies, Deputy) is available to parents/carers in a variety of formats, including via the school website

- work with all parents/carers and the local community to address issues beyond the school gates that give rise to bullying.
- ensure that parents work with the school to model positive behaviour for pupils, both on and offline.
- ensure all parents/carers know about our complaints procedure and how to use it effectively, to raise concerns in an appropriate manner.

9) Monitoring and review: putting policy into practice

- The Head Teacher (also Safeguarding Coordinator) will be informed of all cases of bullying.
- The school will regularly monitor and evaluate mechanisms to ensure that the policy is being consistently applied.
- Any issues identified will be incorporated into the school's action planning.

This policy is based on DfE guidance "[Preventing and Tackling Bullying](#)" July 2017 and supporting documents. It also considers the DfE statutory guidance "[Keeping Children Safe in Education](#)" 2019 and "The Equality Act" 2010.