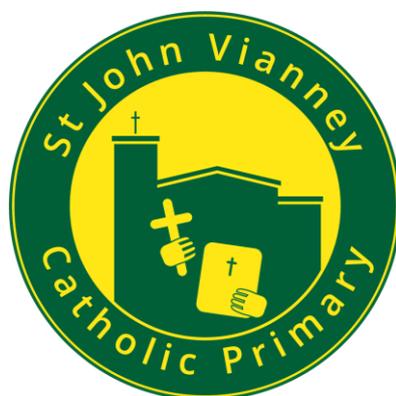




St. John Vianney Catholic School



Anti-Bullying Policy

2018/19

MISSION STATEMENT

“In our school children, staff, parents and carers, governors and parish will work together to create a caring, learning environment with Our Lord as the focal point in which each child is valued as an individual, nurtured and encouraged to fulfil his/her potential.”

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Statement of intent

All children and young people at St. John Vianney are entitled to learn in a safe and supportive environment. This means they should be free from all forms of bullying behaviour. Our anti-bullying policy outlines how instances of bullying will be dealt with by the school and strategies put in place to prevent occurrences of bullying. These strategies, such as learning about tolerance and difference as part of the school's curriculum, aim to promote an inclusive, tolerant and supportive ethos at the school.

The Education and Inspections Act 2006 outlines a number of legal obligations regarding the school's responses to bullying. Under s.89, our school must have measures in place encourage good behaviour and prevent all forms of bullying amongst pupils. These measures should be part of the school's behaviour policy which must be communicated to all pupils, school staff and parents.

All staff, parents/carers and pupils will work together to prevent and reduce any instances of bullying at our school. There will be a zero tolerance policy in place at St. John Vianney.

1. What is bullying?

- 1.1. Bullying is persistent behaviour by an individual or group with the intention of verbally, physically, or emotionally harming another. It is often difficult for a victim to defend themselves against bullying.
- 1.2. Bullying is generally characterised by:
 - **Repetition:** Incidents are not one-offs but frequent and happen over a period of time.
 - **Intent:** The perpetrator means to cause verbal, physical, or emotional harm. It is not accidental.
 - **Targeted:** Bullying is generally targeted at a specific individual or group.
 - **Power Imbalance:** Whether real or perceived, bullying is generally based on unequal power relations.

2. What does bullying look/sound like?

- 2.1. Many different kinds of behaviours can be considered bullying. Bullying can be related to almost anything. Teasing another pupil because of their appearance / religion / ethnicity / gender / sexual-orientation / home life / culture / disability or special educational needs are all just some of the types of bullying which can occur.
- 2.2. **Verbal** – name calling, mimicry, teasing, insulting, spreading rumours, swearing, making threats.
- 2.3. **Physical** – any unwanted or inappropriate touching, physical intimidation, hitting, pushing, kicking, pinching, poking, damaging or taking of belongings, deliberate pushing and shoving, threats of violence and extortion.
- 2.4. **Emotional** – spreading rumours, deliberate exclusion from groups, tormenting, ridiculing, isolating, refusing to work with another pupil, revealing personal information, threatening, inciting or coercing others to treat an individual in a manner that could be considered bullying.
- 2.5. **Cyber** – threats and intimidation, harassment/'cyber-stalking', defamation, exclusion or peer rejection, impersonation and unauthorised publication of private information or images. (It can include messages intended as jokes, but which have a harmful or upsetting effect.)

3. Legal issues related to bullying

- 3.1. Under the Equality Act 2010 and the Equality Duty (5 April 2011), the school has a responsibility to: eliminate unlawful discrimination, harassment, victimisation and any other conduct prohibited by the Act; advance equality of opportunity between people who share a protected characteristic and people who do not share it; foster good relations between people who share a protected characteristic and people who do not share it.

- 3.2. Under the Human Rights Act (HRA) 1998, schools could have charges brought against them if they allow the rights of children and young people at their school to be breached by failing to take bullying seriously. The National Association of Head Teachers has acknowledged this, adding to their guidelines that Headteachers must 'satisfy themselves' that their school's anti-bullying policy complies with the HRA 1998. Headteachers cannot do this without fully involving their teaching staff.
- 3.3. Although bullying itself is not a criminal offence, some types of harassment, threatening behaviour and/or communications could be considered criminal offences:
 - 3.3.1. Under the Malicious Communications Act it is an offence for a person to send an electronic communication to another person with the intent to cause distress or anxiety or which conveys a message which is indecent or grossly offensive, a threat, or information which is false and known or believed to be false by the sender.
 - 3.3.2. Protection from Harassment Act 1997 makes it an offence to knowingly pursue any course of conduct amounting to harassment.
 - 3.3.3. s. 127 of the Communications Act 2003 makes it an offence to send, by public means of a public electronic communications network, a message or other matter that is grossly offensive or one of an indecent, obscene or menacing character. It is unlawful to disseminate defamatory information in any media including internet sites.
 - 3.3.4. Other forms of bullying which are illegal and should be reported to police include: violence or assault, theft, repeated harassment or intimidation and hate crimes.

4. Prevention

- 4.1. Staff will encourage pupil co-operation and the development of interpersonal skills through the use of group work and pair work.
- 4.2. Bullying should be discussed as part of the curriculum and diversity, difference and respect for others should be promoted and celebrated through various lessons.
- 4.3. Changing and organising seating arrangements in class can help to prevent instances of bullying.
- 4.4. Potential victims of bullying should be drawn into working groups with children who do not abuse or take advantage of them.
- 4.5. Opportunities to extend friendship groups and interactive skills will be provided through participation in special events (for example, drama productions, sporting activities, cultural groups.)
- 4.6. All members of the school community should be made aware of the school's bullying policies.

- 4.7. All staff members should have received some training on identifying and dealing with bullying.
- 4.8. A safe, supervised place, such as the library, should be available for pupils to go at lunch if they are involved in conflict with their peers or wish to avoid a bully.

5. Staff guidance principles

- Prevention will be at the forefront of our bullying policy.
- Staff will treat reports of bullying very seriously.
- Staff will not ignore suspected bullying.
- Unpleasantness by one pupil towards another will always be challenged and never ignored.
- Staff will take action immediately. This applies to all staff, not only teaching staff.
- Staff will respect pupils' privacy and information about specific instances of bullying will not be discussed with others, unless in a setting the victim gives consent to.
- Follow-up support will be given to both the victim and bully in the months following any incidents to ensure all bullying has stopped.

6. Roles and responsibilities

It is the responsibility of all staff to be alert to possible harassment of pupils and deal with incidents of bullying as the highest priority. Other specific responsibilities are stated below.

- 6.1. The governors will (evaluate and review) the anti-bullying policy, and will ensure that it is non-discriminatory.
- 6.2. The headteacher will review and amend the policy, using staff experience of dealing with bullying incidents in the previous year to improve procedures and taking account of new legislation and government guidance. The headteacher will keep a record of all reported incidents and provide appropriate training for staff members.
- 6.3. Teachers will be alert to social dynamics in their class and available for pupils who wish to report bullying. They will also provide follow-up support following bullying incidents. They will ensure that they are alert to possible bullying situations, particularly exclusion from friendship groups. Throughout the year, the composition of groups shows sensitivity to those who have been the victims of bullying.
- 6.4. The behaviour mentor, often the first people to receive reports of bullying, will offer emotional support to the victims, and will alert the relevant head of year and form tutor.
- 6.5. Parents/carers should inform their child's form teacher if they are concerned that their child may be being bullied / involved in bullying.
- 6.6. Pupils should inform a staff member if they witness bullying, or are a victim of bullying. They should not respond to bullying by making counter-threats, walking away from any dangerous situations and avoiding involving other pupils in incidents. Pupils should be advised to retain all evidence of cyber-bullying as evidence.

7. Procedures for dealing with bullying

7.1. Minor incidents: will be reported to the pupils' Teacher, who should investigate the incident, set appropriate sanctions for the perpetrator and inform the Headteacher of the incident and outcome.

7.2. Serious incidents: the procedure outlined below will be adopted by all staff in serious incidents.

7.3. Interviews:

- The victim, alleged bully and witnesses are all to be interviewed separately.
- Try to ensure that there is no possibility of contact between the pupils interviewed, for example by texting.
- If a pupil is injured, take the pupil immediately to first aid for a medical opinion of the extent of the injuries.
- Use a room that allows you to interview in privacy. A witness is recommended for serious incidents.
- If appropriate, and necessary, ask all parties (bully, victim, witnesses) to write down details. This may need prompting with questions from you to obtain the full picture.
- Avoid making premature assumptions. It is important not to be judgemental at this stage. Listen carefully to all accounts, be non-confrontational and do not attach blame until your investigation is complete.
- Staff are encouraged to adopt a 'problem-solving' approach, asking the bully to suggest ways they could have improved the situation, and, if the victim has provoked the bullying incident, helping them to understand and explain more appropriate ways of behaving.
- Inform all pupils concerned that they must not discuss the interview with other pupils.

7.4. Record keeping:

- The teacher who conducted the interviews should write out a brief summary of discussions. A separate interview sheet should be completed for each pupil involved and the written statements of each part should be included.
- This record should then be forwarded on to the Headteacher, who is responsible for holding all records centrally.

7.5. Action/Sanctions:

Conventional sanctions such as, break-time detention, may be pursued. In addition to this however, the following actions should be taken. Discretion can be used.

7.5.1. Appropriate action to deal with the bully:

- If you are satisfied that bullying did take place, help the pupil to understand the consequences of their actions and warn them that there must be no further intimidation. Inform them of the type of sanction to be used in this instance and future sanctions if the bullying continues.
- If possible, try for reconciliation and a genuine apology from the pupil. This can be in writing to the victim (and/or witnesses if appropriate), or face-to-face, but only with

the victim's full consent. (Discretion should be used here; victims should never feel pressured into a face-to-face meeting with the bully.)

- Realise that some pupils do not appreciate the distress they are causing and are willing to change their behaviour.
- Try to reach agreement on reasonable long-term behaviour.
- Prepare the pupil to face their peer group - discuss what they will say to others.
- Inform parents about bullying incidents and what action is being taken. Face-to-face meetings may be appropriate.
- Share details with all staff at staff briefing meetings.
- All staff informally monitor pupil over the next half.

7.5.2. Appropriate actions to deal with the victim:

- The Teacher should check informally on a weekly basis for a month after the complaint of bullying.
- The Headteacher should check formally the week after the bullying, and again during the same half term.
- Encourage the victim to tell a trusted adult in school if bullying is repeated.
- Encourage the victim to broaden their friendship groups.

7.6. Follow-up:

The progress of both the bully and the victim should be monitored by their class teachers and / or the learning mentor. One-on-one sessions to discuss how they are getting on may be appropriate.

If the incidence was sufficiently serious, follow-up correspondence with parents a month after the incidence may be necessary. This should be from the Headteacher.

7.6.1. Pupils who have been bullied will be supported by:

- Being listened to (having an immediate opportunity to meet with their class teacher, learning mentor or other trusted adult of their choice).
- Being reassured.
- Being offered continued support.

7.6.2. Pupils who have bullied others will be supported by:

- Receiving a consequence to their actions.
- Being able to discuss what happened.
- Reflecting on why they became involved.
- Understanding what they did wrong and why they need to change.
- Appropriate assistance from parents/carers.

8. Bullying outside of the school

Teachers have the power to discipline pupils for misbehaving outside the school premises. This can relate to any bullying incidents occurring anywhere off the school premises.

Where bullying outside school is reported to school staff, it should be investigated and acted on. In all cases of misbehaviour or bullying, the teacher can only discipline the pupil on school premises or elsewhere when the pupil is under the lawful control of the staff member.

Headteachers have a specific statutory power to discipline pupils for poor behaviour outside of the school premises. Section 89(5) of the Education and Inspections Act 2006 gives headteachers the power to regulate pupils' conduct when they are not on school premises and therefore not under the lawful charge of a school staff member.

The headteacher should also consider whether it is appropriate to notify the police or anti-social behaviour coordinator in their local authority of the action taken against a pupil. If the misbehaviour could be criminal or poses a serious threat to a member of the public, the police should always be informed.