



St Boniface's Catholic School Anti-Bullying Policy

Principles

'My commandment is this: love one another just as I love you.' John 15:12

Introduction

St Boniface is committed to working with students and parents to provide a learning environment that is secure and supportive so that all individuals can develop head, heart and hands, free from fear of ridicule, harassment or physical threat. We aim to create an environment where all members of the school community feel safe, respected and valued. All children have an absolute right to be protected from others who may wish to harm, degrade or abuse them. Bullying of any kind is unacceptable and will not be tolerated at our school. This policy reflects our active commitment to promote and safeguard the welfare of students at our school and rests within the Behaviour Policy of the school.

Scope

This policy applies only to incidents of bullying which take place on school premises. However, the school has an enduring interest in the welfare and conduct of its students and will respond to any information it receives about bullying outside school.

Purpose

- To ensure that students, staff, parents and Governors understand what bullying is.
- To ensure that all stakeholders understand the school's approach to bullying
- To promote a general awareness about bullying and to enforce the idea that it will not be tolerated
- To create a framework for students to speak out against bullying and not to be fearful of the consequences
- To reassure parents that bullying will be dealt with in a caring, firm and professional manner
- To provide students with the skills and strategies necessary to deal with bullies.

Our Statutory duty

The Head Teacher has a legal duty under section 89 Education Inspections Act 2006 to draw up procedures to prevent bullying among students and to bring these procedures to the attention of staff, parents and students. Notre Dame School works within the parameters of this policy and takes cognisance of DfE documentation: 'Preventing and tackling bullying - Advice for Headteachers, staff and governing bodies' July, 2017; Keeping Children Safe in Education (KCSIE, September 2016) and the Equality Act (2010).

Definition

The Department for Education (DfE) defines bullying as 'Behaviour by an individual or group, usually repeated over a period of time, that intentionally hurts another individual or group either physically or emotionally'.

Bullying will not be tolerated at St Boniface's School and is seen as the misuse of power. The school community has a duty to protect all its members and provide a safe, healthy environment.

Creating a climate to prevent bullying

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While recognising that bullying happens in all schools and within the wider community, parents/carers and students at St Boniface's School are encouraged to report incidents of bullying to any member of staff and be confident that action will be taken as per the school procedures set out below to deal effectively with the victims of, and those responsible for, acts of bullying. Education to prevent bullying will be provided to all students during their time at St Boniface's School and appropriate behaviour will be reinforced during lessons and around the school site.

Opportunities to address bullying

St Boniface's School will raise the awareness of the nature of bullying through a range of curriculum and pastoral opportunities.

- PSHE, Religious Studies, Ubuntu and Kairos.
- Assemblies e.g. National Anti-Bullying Week, National Safer Internet Day
- Presentations and workshops from outside agencies on Dimension Days
- Tutor time activities and discussions
- Peer Mentoring, Student Forum and Anti bullying ambassadors
- Student Voice

The school Mission Statement includes that Notre Dame is a school that promotes Christian attitudes and a school where every person belongs. Through this the students are encouraged to develop and understand the qualities of patience, empathy, cooperation and understanding. As well as the British Values of mutual respect, democracy, the rule of the law, individual liberty and tolerance of those of different faiths and beliefs.

St Boniface's School communicates its stance on bullying to all students via assemblies, tutor time, the student planner and within lessons. Parents are notified of the School's stance on bullying via emails, the student planner and by publishing this policy on the school website.

Types of bullying

The school recognises that there are several forms of bullying and that they can be thought of as bullying if they are done maliciously, deliberately or persistently to hurt or upset or have that effect. Bullying can occur in many ways. For example:

Physical

- Pinching, punching, pushing, kicking and hitting.
- Any violence that is done on purpose to others.

Verbal

- Deliberate, unkind and persistent remarks.
- Name calling, sarcasm, persistent teasing.
- Racist, religious, sexual or homophobic name calling.
- Being hurtful about appearance.

Psychological

- Using aggressive gestures.
- Spreading hurtful rumours.
- Tormenting, humiliating, mocking, taunting.
- Excluding someone and leaving them out on purpose.

Written

- Writing graffiti or using images/offensive materials.
- Insults contained in note passing.
- Threatening letters.

Cyber

- The use of information and communication technologies, particularly mobile phones and the internet, deliberately to upset someone else.
- Hurtful, harmful messages sent from individuals and groups.

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Theft/Damaging property

- Taking someone's bag deliberately and breaking it.
- Malicious damage to property e.g. mobile phone, pencil case, uniform.

Racist

- A racial taunt, graffiti, gestures.
- Making inappropriate comments regarding faith, beliefs, culture or country of origin.

Sexual

- Making sexually abusive comments.
- Unwanted physical contact.

Homophobic / Transgender

- Teasing or name calling, even in jest
- Spreading rumours about people's sexual orientation for the purpose of making fun of them.
- Hitting, intimidating and isolating people who are believed to be gay or transgender

Signs and symptoms

A child may indicate they are experiencing bullying through certain behaviours. All staff, students and parents should be alert to signs of bullying.

- Is frightened of walking to or from school doesn't want to go on the bus begs to be driven to school.
- Changes their usual routine.
- Is unwilling to go to school (school-phobic).
- Feigning illness or truanting from school
- Becomes withdrawn, anxious, or nervous.
- Self-harm
- Attempts or threatens suicide or runs away.
- Cries themselves to sleep at night or has nightmares feels ill in the morning.
- Decline in achievement in lessons.
- Comes home with uniform torn or belongings damaged.
- Has possessions that 'go missing' or repeatedly asks for money.
- Has unexplained cuts or bruises.
- Becomes aggressive, disruptive or unreasonable.
- 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 and jumpy when a cyber-message is received.

This is not an exhaustive list. These signs and behaviour could indicate other problems, but bullying should be considered a possibility and should be investigated.

St Boniface's School's teaching and support staff must be alert to the signs of bullying and act promptly and firmly against it in accordance with school policy.

Implementation

The school recognises that bullying is never acceptable and will follow the procedures as outlined below:

- If bullying is suspected or reported, the incident will be dealt with immediately by the member of staff who has been approached and passed on to the Pastoral Team.
- All students will be listened to, and individual issues understood. The school provides opportunities for students to report bullying so that they are assured that they will be listened to and the incident acted on.
- A clear account of the incident will be recorded.
- The Pastoral Team will interview all concerned and will record the incident
- Staff will take appropriate action on information given. It will be the professional judgement of senior staff to determine the nature of the problem and the appropriate level of response and course of action.

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- Form tutors will be kept informed and the appropriate subject teachers will be informed where necessary.
- Parents will be contacted.
- Incidents of bullying will be recorded on CPOMS. This data is used for monitoring and evaluation and is shared with the governing body.
- The involvement of external agencies will be used if appropriate.

A variety of appropriate strategies may be used to deal with reported incidents:

- Apology from bully to victim (verbal/written).
- Discussion of victim's own behaviour leading up to the incident (incidents are not always clear cut).
- Positive steps to be taken with bully to encourage improved behaviour.
- Monitoring of bully after incident to see any repeated behaviour.
- Counselling of victim/bully.
- Parents /carers may be contacted by letter/telephone/invited into school, if appropriate.
- Implement disciplinary sanctions, including detentions/exclusions.
- Use specific organisations and resources for help with problems.
- Work with the wider community such as the police and children's services where bullying is particularly serious or persistent and when a criminal offence may have been committed.

Students who have been bullied will be supported by:

- Offering an immediate opportunity to discuss the experience with a form tutor or member of staff of their choice.
- Reassuring the student.
- Offering support / intervention.
- Restoring self-esteem and confidence.

Students who have bullied will be helped by:

- Discussing what happened.
- Discovering why the student became involved.
- Establishing the wrong doing and need to change.
- Informing parents or carers to help change the attitude of the student.
- Issuing the appropriate consequence.
- A meditation with the victim.
- Where appropriate working with other agencies.

By order of the Governing Board of St Boniface's School

Policy first adopted by Governors: December 2021

Review Date: 8th December 2021

Signed Chair of Governors

Next Review: December 2024