

HOLY FAMILY CATHOLIC PRIMARY SCHOOL ANTI-BULLYING POLICY

September 2022

Review: September 2023

OUR MISSION

With Christ at the centre, we love one another and always try our best.

We learn together and look after each other by showing respect.

We understand that we are all unique and precious in God's eyes

INTRODUCTION

The above Mission Statement shows clearly how the school places considerable emphasis on promoting in the children a Christian commitment according to the Catholic principles of the Gospel and upon helping each child to take his/her place in society.

It follows that the school should foster good and acceptable behaviour - self discipline - if it is to achieve this aim.

This Policy Statement on Bullying at Holy Family is an attempt to help the School Community - the Governors, Teachers, Support Staff, Parents and Children, - to achieve this Aim:

-by recognising and acknowledging that all schools have potential problems with "bullying" - even if only slight or infrequent - which should concern, not only the children, but also the teachers and all other adults who have care of the children. We at Holy Family cannot say with confidence, "There is no Bullying here". No matter how minimal the problem may be we must be on our guard always and be ready to act positively.

-by establishing whose responsibility it is to challenge such behaviour in the school.

-by suggesting how the School might best promote good and acceptable behaviour.

-by stating unequivocally the sort of behaviour the School expects from the children,

-by suggesting procedures as ways of preventing or indeed of overcoming the problems of bullying.

-by ensuring that bullying is challenged throughout the school consistently and fairly.

WHAT IS BULLYING ?

It would appear to be inevitable that where there are large groups of children there will be some element of "bullying". All schools accept this and deal with it accordingly.

"BULLYING", however, is not always easy to define.

There are many definitions but most would agree that BULLYING is:

- * deliberately hurtful behaviour - hostile and aggressive towards the victim
- * is repeated OFTEN over a period of time.
- * is always painful and distressing for the victim - who finds it difficult to defend him/herself.

Bullying can take many forms but three main types are:

- * **physical** - hitting, kicking, taking belongings.
- * **verbal** - name calling, insulting, racist remarks, remarks about Children with SEN.
- * **Indirect – emotional**, tormenting eg hiding books, humiliation, etc spreading nasty stories and rumours about someone, excluding someone from social groups.

Indirect emotional bullying (name calling, ridicule, excluding from groups, etc.) seems to be more common than physical violence and can be a "hidden" problem in schools.

Pupil Definitions

- Being teased or called names
- Being hit kicked or pushed
- Having money or other things taken from them
- Being ignored or left out
- Being picked on because of their religion, colour or where they are from

Persistent school bullying can result in:

- depression
- low self esteem
- shyness
- poor academic achievement
- isolation
- threatened or attempted suicide

Unchecked bullying also damages the bully who gets away with violence, aggression, threats, etc. and learns that this behaviour gets them all they want.

It is NOT bullying when:

- There is no intention to hurt or harm ie behaviour is thoughtless or accidental
- There is a one off argument/fight between pupils of equal stature or strength
- There is good reason why others cannot be included in a group activity
- A pupil is called a nickname with which they are happy.

POSSIBLE SIGNS OF BULLYING

A child's behaviour may indicate that bullying is taking place in our school.

Whilst the examples below can ALL have several other explanations, bullying could also be responsible if a child is:

school phobic or reluctant to come to school

feels ill in the mornings

begins truanting

begins to do poorly in school work

becomes withdrawn

starts stammering

lacks confidence

has clothing/books damaged

becomes distressed and anxious

has possessions "gone missing"

cries him/herself to sleep

does not eat properly

refuses to say what is wrong (too frightened)

has unexplained bruises, scratches, cuts

begins to bully others

becomes aggressive and unreasonable

gives improbable excuses to explain any of the above

attempts or threatens suicide !

CLEARLY this list is not exhaustive - it is merely a guide to possible symptoms of being bullied.

CHALLENGING BULLYING

There are a number of important reasons why we need to challenge bullying behaviour in our school including:

- the safety and happiness of pupils
- the educational achievement of pupils
- inaction can be interpreted as condoning bullying
- parents need to be reassured that we will respond positively - and effectively - to bullying.

When CHALLENGING bullying in our school no single course of action would seem to be sufficient on its own. The effective promotion of Good Behaviour seems to require a combination of several factors, and at least the following, implemented together, would appear to be necessary:

(i) The creation of a close relationship and understanding between the teachers and children, based on the Principles of the Gospel, the Love of Christ, a mutual respect for each other, - and the clear expectation that children will behave in a responsible manner, and thereby enhance their self-esteem.

(ii) The development of a Curriculum - together with effective teaching methods - that matches the children's needs, develops and sustains their interest, and provides opportunities for success.

(iii) The promotion of a policy for discipline based on a code of acceptable behaviour, and reinforced by disciplinary procedures which strike a balance between rewards and sanctions, and which, while placing particular emphasis on the positive achievements and qualities of the children, also provide a range of sanctions available for dealing with varying degrees of unacceptable behaviour among pupils.

(iv) The acceptance by the Governors, Teachers, Parents, and Children of norms of behaviour and a set of school rules which reflect these norms, and are consistently - and fairly - applied throughout the school.

(v) The positive support of parents.

(vi) The positive support of the Governors.

WHAT CAN WE DO ABOUT BULLYING?

Strategies:

It is important to develop a climate in our school where the children feel our school is a place of peace.

We try to cultivate this climate in a number of ways in our school,

- Teachers and support staff to promote a positive and caring ethos in and around school as stated in our Mission Statement (eg circle time etc)
- Monitors – children to help and support children in each classroom
- Help Patrol – children available at playtimes to help and support children who may feel vulnerable.
- All children encouraged to care and support each other in and around school.

However if a bullying problem is noted then,

The Key Teacher (ie class teacher/headteacher) will:

1. Take the problem seriously.
2. Investigate all incidents:
 - interview bullies and victims separately.
 - interview any witnesses.
3. Decide on appropriate action re: bully.
 - A. One-off "minor" incidents may only require a reprimand and an apology (verbal or written)
 - B. More serious or persistent bullying will require action, e.g.
 - a record in CPOMS
 - an apology from bully/bullies to victim
 - sanctions against bully/bullies
 - the return of items "borrowed"/stolen

WITH SERIOUS OR PERSISTENT BULLYING:

4. Inform the parents of bully/bullies and ask for their support.
5. Provide support during school hours for victim eg partner with a buddy during the day and at playtimes
6. Encourage bully to change behaviour and monitor behaviour.
If appropriate to encourage school watch i.e. Help Patrol and/or monitors to shadow bully & report to the key teacher on findings.
Adult Mentoring by key teacher eg class teacher or headteacher have lessons/class discussions re: bullying eg Circle Time and/or talk to the children at Assembly - re: bullying.
7. Meet victim's family to review and report on progress.
8. Inform members of staff – vigilance!
9. Keep a written **RECORD** of incident, interviews and action taken.

MONITORING AND EVALUATION

We should monitor the situation with regard to bullying regularly -

- i) to enable us to follow up and record progress.

ii) to identify whether or not our Anti-bullying policy is working.

Individual incidents may seem, on the surface, to be isolated occurrences but may be part of a larger problem - a pattern of bullying.

Keeping a written record using CPOMS - who was involved, where, when, what happened, what action was taken etc - will help us to monitor the situation.

All Staff - teaching and non-teaching - should be involved in this, as well as the pupils concerned.

Such records will show whether bullying is becoming more or less frequent, or changing in nature.

PERFORMANCE INDICATORS - EVIDENCE OF SUCCESS

1. Staff more vigilant and responsive to bullying.
2. Children willing to report if they are bullied.
3. Incidence of bullying diminishing.
4. More children involved in prevention and support of others being bullied eg. Peer Mediators.