



# St. Patrick's Catholic Primary School

## Anti-bullying Policy

Written by	Approved by	Approval Date	Review Date
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St. Patrick's Catholic Primary School: Anti-bullying Policy – September 2022

### ST PATRICK'S ANTI-BULLYING STATEMENT

- Bullying and unkindness whether physical or emotional are entirely unacceptable at St Patrick's. It conflicts sharply with the school's principles and we will always treat it seriously.
- Bullying is behaviour by an individual or group, repeated over time, that intentionally hurts another individual or group either physically or emotionally.
- Bullying can take many forms (for instance, cyber-bullying via text messages or the internet), and is often motivated by prejudice against particular groups, for example on grounds of age, race, religion/belief, gender reassignment, disability, marriage and civil partnership, pregnancy and maternity, sex, sexual orientation, or because a child is adopted or has caring responsibilities. It might be motivated by actual differences between pupils, or perceived differences.
- Stopping violence and ensuring immediate physical safety is obviously the school's first priority but emotional bullying can be more damaging than physical; the school has to make its own judgements about each specific case.
- In particular it is noted that peer-on peer abuse can be a form of bullying and, in line with the school's Safeguarding Policy, any peer-on-peer abuse will be treated as a safeguarding matter and passed to the Designated Safeguarding Lead. Please refer to the safeguarding Policy for further information on peer-on-peer abuse.
- 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. It can result in the intimidation of a person or persons through the threat of violence or by isolating them either physically or online.
- Bullying can involve manipulating a third party to tease or torment someone. It can involve complicity that falls short of direct participation. However, it is also considered to be bullying when careless or reckless behaviour unintentionally causes the same effects as intentional actions.
- Bullying is often hidden and subtle. It can also be overt and intimidatory.
- Bullying can happen anywhere and at any time and can involve everyone - pupils, other young people, staff and parents.



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- All members of St Patrick's have the right to enjoy their lives free of bullying and harassment. Anyone who feels bullied or intimidated has the right to expect the School to listen and to act promptly and sensitively to deal with the problem. The School will investigate any incidents, including those which occur outside normal school hours or off the premises.
- If you feel that you are being bullied, talk to a member of staff, including teaching and non teaching staff, Emotional Support Literacy Assistant, Child and Family Support worker. It is also right for you to talk to your parents/carers about it, and for them to discuss it with the school.
- If you find it difficult to talk to anyone at school or at home then you can phone the 24 hour Childline service on 0800 1111. All calls are free and confidential and trained counsellors will help any young person with a problem. Other people who may be able to help you are listed in the Personal Problems
- You should treat others as you would hope to be treated yourself in an atmosphere of mutual respect. If an incident occurs you should do what you can to show your disapproval of bullying.
- Bullying will never stop if it is kept secret and no one faces up to it. If you think someone else is being bullied, talk to a member of staff or a monitor about it. We guarantee that whistle-blower who is acting in good faith will not be penalised and will be supported.
- It is important to recognise that there is culpability if you see or are aware of bullying but do nothing about it. Neglecting to act makes the bystander complicit in the bullying. If you are aware of bullying happening in the school it should immediately be reported to a member of staff.

### AIMS AND OBJECTIVES

At St Patrick's, our community is based upon respect for others, good manners and a sense of decency. We are committed to providing a safe and caring environment that is free from disruption, violence and any form of harassment so that every one of our pupils can develop their full potential. We expect our pupils to treat members of staff with courtesy and co-operation so that they can learn in a relaxed but orderly atmosphere. All pupils should care for and support each other.

Parents/carers and guardians have an important role in supporting St Patrick's in maintaining high standards of behaviour. It is essential that school and homes have consistent expectations of behaviour and that they cooperate closely together. Acceptance of this policy forms part of our standard terms and conditions. This policy is available to parents of pupils and prospective pupils on our website and on request.

At St Patrick's, we always treat bullying, including allegations of bullying very seriously, regardless of whether it is physical or emotional. It conflicts sharply with the school's policy on equal opportunities, as well as with our social and moral principles. Bullying can be so serious that it causes psychological damage, eating disorders, self-harm and even suicide, and, whilst bullying is not a specific criminal offence, there are



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criminal laws which apply to harassment and threatening behaviour. It is also noted that in the case of peer on-peer abuse, bullying can also have safeguarding implications.

### GUIDANCE FOR STAFF

All new members of staff will be given guidance on the school's anti-bullying policy and in how to react to allegations of bullying at Induction. They will be required to read the school's policy as part of their induction.

### PEER-ON PEER ABUSE

Peer-on-peer abuse is abuse by one or more pupils against another pupil. It can manifest itself in many ways and can include bullying (including cyber bullying), physical abuse, initiation/hazing violence and rituals, sexting, sexual assault, gender-based issues and harmful sexual behaviours including sexual violence and sexual harassment. St Patrick's believes that all bullying and peer-on-peer abuse is unacceptable and must be dealt with in this context. Abusive comments and interactions should never be passed off or dismissed as "banter" or "part of growing up". Nor will harmful sexual behaviours be dismissed as the same or "just having a laugh" or "boys being boys".

Please refer to the Safeguarding Policy for further details on peer-on-peer abuse and the management of allegations.

### DETECTING BULLYING

Changes in behaviour that may indicate that a pupil is being bullied include:

- Unwillingness to return to school
- Displays of excessive anxiety, becoming withdrawn or unusually quiet
- Failure to produce work, or producing unusually bad work, or work that appears to have been copied, interfered with or spoiled by others
- Books, bags and other belongings suddenly go missing, or are damaged
- Change to established habits (e.g. giving up music lessons, change to accent or vocabulary) □  
Diminished levels of self confidence

### Racism

Examples of racism that we need to be alert to include:

- Verbal abuse by name-calling, racist jokes and offensive mimicry
- Physical threats or attacks
- Inciting others to behave in a racist way
- Racist graffiti or other written insults, even against food, music, dress or customs
- Refusing to cooperate in work or in play



### Sexual bullying

Sexual bullying can have the following characteristics:

- Sexual innuendoes and propositions
- Abusive name-calling
- Looks and comments about appearance, attractiveness (e.g. emerging puberty)

### Homophobia

We should be alert to sexual bullying based around sexual orientation, whether or not the person being bullied is gay, lesbian or bisexual. Generally Homophobic bullying looks like other sorts of bullying, but in particular it can include:

- Verbal abuse - including spreading rumours that someone is gay, suggesting that something or someone is inferior and so they are 'gay' - e.g. 'those trainers are so gay!'
- Physical abuse – including hitting, punching, kicking, sexual assault, and threatening behaviour.
- Cyberbullying – using on-line spaces to spread rumours about someone or exclude them. Can also include text messaging, including video and picture messaging.

### Special educational needs

We should be alert to the fact that pupils with special educational needs or disabilities are often at greater risk of being bullied than other pupils on the basis of their educational difficulties or disability.

With constantly advancing technology we must be alert to this unpleasant and particularly intrusive form of bullying. Cyberbullying can involve Social Networking Sites, like Snapchat, Instagram, Facebook and Twitter, emails and mobile phones, used for SMS messages and as cameras.

### Banter

It should be noted that abusive comments and interactions may not be passed off as mere 'banter'. Such comments referring to a person's race, religion, ethnicity, sexual orientation, gender reassignment, culture, special educational needs or because a child is a carer are not acceptable and will be treated as bullying matters.

### SHARING ANY CONCERNS

Pupils should be encouraged to "tell" when bullying occurs this is difficult and pupils often balk at it, but the more it occurs the more acceptable it becomes. We should guarantee that whistle-blowers who act in good faith will not be penalised and will be supported.

Others in a year group should be reminded how important it is to let someone know if a problem recurs.



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Any staff or senior pupils who witness any form of bullying, however minor or who are at all concerned about any behaviour should report it

Members of the community (pupils, staff and parents) need to be mindful that the school expects any knowledge of bullying to be reported. A bystander who does not report bullying is complicit in the act.

Parents should be made aware on their child's arrival in the school of the importance of keeping lines of communication open so that any unhappiness of which they hear can be investigated and where necessary dealt with quickly.

### PROCEDURES FOR DEALING WITH REPORTED BULLYING

If an incident of bullying is reported, the following procedures are adopted: The member of staff to whom it was reported or who first discovers the situation, will control the situation, reassure and support the pupils involved.

- The victim will be spoken to on their own and asked to write an account of events.
- The alleged bully, together with all others who were involved, will be interviewed individually and asked to write an immediate account of events.
- The incident should be recorded on CPOMS and forwarded to the Head.
- The parents/guardians of all parties should be informed and invited into school to discuss the matter. Their support should be sought.
- A monitoring and review strategy will be put in place. Bullying incident should be addressed as a Safeguarding concern where a child is suffering, or is likely to suffer, significant harm.
- In line with KCSIE 2019 all peer-on-peer abuse will also be treated as a Safeguarding matter.

### RECORDING AND MONITORING INCIDENTS OF BULLYING

All bullying incidents and our response to them should be recorded on CPOMS and relevant staff informed

### CYBERBULLYING POLICY

#### Definition

“Cyberbullying is the use of Information Communications Technology (ICT), particularly mobile phones and the internet, deliberately to upset someone else.”

Department for Children Schools and Families

Cyberbullying can have a serious impact because of a number of factors including:

- Invasion of personal space



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- The anonymity (at least initially) of the bully
- The ability to broadcast upsetting messages and images rapidly to a potentially huge audience and to continue to do so repeatedly over a long period of time

### Forms of Cyberbullying

Cyberbullying may take different forms:

- Threats and intimidation via electronic means
- Harassment or 'cyberstalking'
- Sexting
- Vilification/defamation
- Setting up website pages to invite others to post derogatory comment about a pupil
- The sending of insulting and vicious text messages
- Exclusion or peer rejection
- Impersonation
- Unauthorised publication of private information or images (including 'happy slapping')
- The posting of fake and/or obscene photographs of the victim on a social networking site
- Hacking into social networking sites and removing and circulating material which may be embarrassing or personal
- Manipulation
- "Chatting" on line e.g. through Social Network/Gaming Sites etc.

Whilst some cyberbullying is clearly deliberate and aggressive, it must be recognised that some incidents of cyberbullying may be unintentional and the result of simply not thinking about the consequences.

### Preventing Cyberbullying

Members of the St Patrick's community will understand and discuss cyberbullying through:

- The sharing of the definition of cyberbullying
- The discussion of cyberbullying and its forms
- The learning of our responsibilities in the use of ICT, and the sanctions for its misuse



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- The Pupil's E-Safety Committee will be used as a way of sharing information in this area

The prevention of cyberbullying will be promoted through discussion and student activities around what cyberbullying is and how it differs from other forms of bullying. Cyberbullying education will be delivered through PSHE lessons and through ICT lessons.

### Responding to Cyberbullying

#### Investigating incidents - the aggrieved

The person being bullied should keep examples of texts or emails received to aid an investigation.

To contain the spread of cyberbullying consideration must be given to -

- Contact the service provider or host (e.g. the social networking site)
- Confiscate phones
- Contact the police (in relation to illegal content)

Members of the school community will be advised on steps they can take to avoid recurrence. This will include-

- Not to retaliate or reply
- Being provided with appropriate contact details of service providers
- An awareness of changing contact details, blocking contacts, or leaving a chatroom.

All allegations of bullying will be taken seriously.

#### Working with the perpetrator and sanctions

Steps should be taken to change their attitude and behaviour as well as ensuring access to any support that is required.

The following factors should be considered when determining the appropriate sanctions:

- The impact on the victim: was the bully acting anonymously?
- Was the material widely circulated and humiliating?
- How difficult was controlling the spread of the material?
- The motivation of the bully: was the incident unintentional or retaliation to bullying behaviour from others?





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Technology-specific sanctions for students engaged in cyberbullying behaviour could include limiting internet access for a period of time or removing the right to bring a mobile phone into school. Professional judgment will be used in choosing from a range of strategies to remind individuals and groups of their responsibility to prevent bullying and help deal with it if it happens. Parents of both the aggrieved and the perpetrator (where known) will be informed so that the process of restorative justice can be implemented at an early stage. External agencies will be involved when this is deemed appropriate especially where there has been a breach of criminal law.