



# *Our Lady of the Assumption Catholic Primary School*



## **Anti Bullying Policy**

Approved by Full Governing Body: 28<sup>th</sup> September 2016

Signed: *A Kiely* Chair of Governors

**To be reviewed: September 2018 or before if required**

### **Safeguarding Statement:**

'Our Lady of the Assumption Catholic Primary School is committed to safeguarding and promoting the safety and welfare of all children and expects all staff and volunteers to share this commitment.'

### **Our Vision**

As a Catholic school that puts Christ at the centre, we are committed to developing independent, successful and confident children who have high aspirations, who gain a sense of achievement and leave our school with a wealth of happy memories.

### **Our Motto: Be the best that you can be!**

At Our Lady of the Assumption Catholic Primary School staff, parents and children work together to create a safe, happy and caring environment where children can learn and grow in accordance with the Christian ethos made explicit in our Mission Statement. Bullying, either verbal, physical or indirect will not be tolerated. It is everyone's responsibility to aim to prevent occurrences of bullying and to deal with any incidents quickly and effectively. Although we hope to promote positive behaviours through such strategies as circle time, research has shown time and time again that the extent of bullying in schools is greatly underestimated.

### **Definition**

Bullying can be described as being 'a deliberate act done to cause distress solely in order to give a feeling of power, status or other gratification to the bully. It can range from ostracising, name-calling, teasing, threats and extortion, through to physical assault on persons and/or their property. It can be an unresolved single frightening incident which casts a shadow over a child's life, or a series of such incidents.'

The occasional fight or quarrel between pupils who have equal power may be worrying but does not fall into the category of bullying

Our Lady of the Assumption Catholic Primary School recognises the following types of behaviour as bullying / harassment:

- Emotional - being unfriendly, excluding, tormenting (e.g. hiding books, threatening gestures)
- Physical - pushing, kicking, hitting, punching or any use of violence
- Racist - racial taunts, graffiti, gestures
- Sexual - unwanted physical contact or sexually abusive comments
- Homophobic - because of, or focussing on, the issue of sexuality
- Verbal - name-calling, sarcasm, spreading rumours, teasing
- Cyber - all areas of internet, e.g. email & internet chat room mobile threats by text messaging & calls, misuse of associated technology (camera and video facilities)
- It may also include having money and other possessions taken or messed about with

### **Dealing with Bullying**

Through the school's PSHE curriculum, Protective Behaviours Programme and assemblies, pupils are made aware of what constitutes antisocial behaviour and are encouraged to inform their teacher and/or any adult of concerns they have in relation to being the subject of bullying or harassment. Pupils are made aware that ignoring the problem will not make it go away. School advises pupils and their parents how to stay safe, including safe use of the internet and mobile phones.

### **Signs and Symptoms**

A child may indicate by signs or behaviour that he or she is being bullied. Adults should be aware of these possible signs and that they should investigate if a child:

- is frightened of walking to or from school
- doesn't want to go on the school / public bus
- begs to be driven to school
- changes their usual routine
- is unwilling to go to school (school phobic)
- begins truanting
- becomes withdrawn anxious, or lacking in confidence
- starts stammering
- runs away or attempts / threatens suicide
- cries themselves to sleep at night or has nightmares
- feels ill in the morning
- standards in school work deteriorate
- comes home with clothes torn or books damaged
- has possessions go "missing"
- asks for money or starts stealing money (to pay bully)
- has dinner or other monies continually "lost"
- has unexplained cuts or bruises
- comes home starving (money / lunch has been stolen)
- becomes aggressive, disruptive or unreasonable
- is bullying other children or siblings
- 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

These signs and behaviours could indicate other problems, but bullying should be considered a possibility and should be investigated.

## **Reporting incidents of Bullying**

We recognise the sensitive nature of reporting incidents of bullying and that some children may feel unable to approach their class teacher or other adult directly. Therefore alternative ways in which a child can report that they are being bullied are available to the children. These methods of communication include:

- Parents may relay incidents to staff. Staff are on the playground daily and are available for parents to speak to
- Opportunities to speak to Mrs Lucas (Pastoral Manager)
- Pupils devise their own support network through the Protective Behaviour Programme

ALL reports of bullying will be taken seriously and recorded and kept on file in the HT office.

## **Strategy for dealing with Bullying**

The following is a list of actions available to staff depending on the perceived seriousness of the situation. The emphasis is always on a caring, listening approach as bullies are often victims too – that is why they bully.

### **Procedures to deal with reported incidents of bullying / harassment**

- The pupil reporting the incident should be listened to carefully and supportively.
- All cases of bullying will be recorded by the staff member
- Witnesses to the incident (s) will be spoken to
- If the staff member feels the evidence given by the child is representative of bullying the Head Teacher should be informed.
- In serious cases parents will be informed and will be invited to attend a meeting to discuss the problem and resolution
- If necessary, and appropriate, police will be consulted

### **Outcomes for the victim**

The pupil will be re-assured that the school is dealing with the incident and told of the measures to be put in place to prevent the perpetrators from offending again. The Head Teacher will report back her decision to the victim's class teacher.

The parents of the victim will be informed of the incident and measures taken to prevent the incident happening again.

The victim will be closely monitored by the class teacher and Head Teacher. This will include making short observations of the victim on the playground.

The situation will remain a focus at the weekly Senior Leadership Meeting until it has been established that the bullying/harassment has ceased.

If appropriate, the perpetrator(s) will be asked to apologise to the victim.

### **Outcomes for the perpetrator(s)**

It will be made clear that the school adopts a zero policy toward the kind of behaviour they have been exhibiting. The perpetrators will be asked to apologise for their actions. Guidance and support will be given to the perpetrator(s) to support him / her / them in changing their behaviour.

The Head Teacher will inform the parents and ask them to come into school to discuss the incident.

As a consequence the Head Teacher may:

- Withdraw privileges for a set period of time e.g. withdrawal from representing the school or attending an after school activity.
- Withdraw playtimes for a set period of time.
- Contact the police
- In extreme cases a period of exclusion will be served on the perpetrators.

The situation will remain a focus at the weekly Senior Leadership Meeting until it has been established that the bullying/harassment has ceased.

As the behaviour of the perpetrator (s) (hopefully) improves, then favoured activities can be reinstated, and the child should be praised for improved behaviour. This will rebuild the child's self-esteem, which may have been damaged after being caught bullying, or could have been low anyway, hence the bullying.

In order to help prevent bullying in Our Lady of the Assumption Primary School we will:

- Reinforce the three school rules: Follow instructions with thought and care / Show good manners at all times / Care for everyone and everything
- Follow our behaviour policy which is based on positivity with rewards given for good behaviour
- Ensure age appropriate consequences are implemented

In addition we will:

- Ensure our Pastoral Manager Mrs Lucas is available to support children who are victims and perpetrators of bullying
- Address relevant bullying issues within the curriculum
- Deliver the Protective Behaviour Programme
- Timetable PSHE opportunities
- Plan assemblies based on key topics from SEAL
- Read and write stories and poems about bullying and discussing the impact of it
- Make up role-play situations about how to deal with a bully
- Have discussions about bullying to ensure all children have a clear understanding of what bullying, and being bullied, means
- Raise awareness of Anti bullying week in November
- Use circle time activities within lessons to provide opportunities for children to discuss bullying concerns and anxieties
- Raise awareness of agencies that can support children, ensuring confidentiality e.g. Childline, Kidscape

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