

Anti-Bullying Statement

Everyone connected with St. Joseph's has a responsibility to create a secure, safe environment for students in our care so that parents may send their children to school in the confident knowledge that they will be protected from bullies.

Bullying behaviour is entirely at odds with the Mission Statement of the school which states that, "Living, Loving and Learning through Christ".

At St Joseph's we define bullying behaviour as:

- repeated wilful, conscious desire to hurt, threaten or frighten someone;
- including name-calling, teasing, jostling, malicious gossip, verbal abuse, intimidation, damaging or stealing property, coercion of a person into acts he/she does not wish to do, physical assault, social exclusion;
- any repeated behaviour using threat and fear which involves the bully gaining pleasure from a victim's pain, fear or humiliation.

In short, it is a repeated deliberate attempt by a pupil (or group of pupils) to make the life of another pupil (or group of pupils) a misery.

We recognise that bullying is a rarely witnessed event, and that the most likely source of information to teachers will be through hearsay (either direct from the victim, or indirectly through witnesses or parents). There must be a publicly acknowledged readiness to pay attention to any reports of bullying. All bullying is logged on Arbor and a report is created half termly for the headteacher. The headteacher discusses each incident with the Assistant Headteacher in charge of behaviour.

Staff, students and parents are made aware of procedures for dealing with bullying behaviour which discourage the bully without humiliating the victim and of the process of restorative justice.

As a school when an incident has been reported:

- We devote time to the victim.
- Take the incident seriously.
- Offer concrete help, support, reassurance and advice relevant to the specific circumstances.
- Make sure that restorative justice is at the heart of the process.
- When dealing with the bully; make disapproval plain, the punishment appropriate, and give a clear explanation of why it is being applied.
- We will record the incident precisely and be seen to do so by bully and victim. Incident sheets are obtainable from the pastoral office, Heads of Year and via the report form on the website.
- Get the bully, the victim and any witnesses to write statements. Involve all present in the incident (including bystanders).
- Record information on Arbor and notify any appropriate persons (e.g. Form tutor).
- Inform whole staff if incident arose out of a situation where everyone needs to be vigilant.
- Inform both sets of parents calmly, clearly and concisely, and if necessary, invite them into school to discuss the situation.

- Follow up the incident at a later date; to check on the situation, and to judge the success of strategies employed.

Publicity is the key to getting the whole school approach to bullying across effectively to:

- Staff – thorough discussion and review of procedures outlined here and in the anti-bullying policy.
- Students – through assemblies, through the HRSE curriculum, through attitudes of all staff.
- Parents– through the website, newsletters, anti-bullying resources.

Cyber-Bullying

This school believes that all people in our community have the right to teach and learn in a supportive, caring and safe environment without fear of being bullied. We believe that every individual in school has a duty to report an incident of bullying whether it happens to themselves or to another person.

At St. Joseph's we take this bullying as seriously as all other types of bullying and therefore will deal with each situation individually. An episode may result in a simple verbal warning. It might result in a parental discussion. Clearly, more serious cases will result in further sanctions.

Technology allows the user to bully anonymously or from an unknown location, 24 hours a day, 7 days a week. Cyber-bullying leaves no physical scars so it is perhaps less evident to a parent or teacher, but it is highly intrusive and the hurt it causes can be very severe.

Young people are particularly adept at adapting to new technology, an area that can seem a closed world to adults. For example, the numerous acronyms used by young people in chat rooms and in text messages (POS – Parents Over Shoulder, TUL – Tell You Later) make it difficult for adults to recognise potential threats.

At St Joseph's, students are taught how to:

- Understand how to use these technologies safely and know about the risks and consequences of misusing them.
- Know what to do if they or someone they know is being cyber bullied.
- Report any problems with cyber bullying.
- If they do have a problem they can talk to the school, parents, report and block functions, the police or the mobile network (for phone) or the Internet Service Provider (ISP) to do something about it.

St. Joseph's School has:

1. An Acceptable Use Policy (AUP) that includes clear statements about e-communications.
2. Information for parents on;
 - E-communication standards and practices in schools
 - what to do if problems arise
 - what is being taught in the curriculum
3. Support for parents and pupils if cyber bullying occurs by;
 - assessing the harm caused
 - identifying those involved
 - taking steps to repair harm and to prevent recurrence

Information for Students

If you are being bullied by phone or the Internet:

- Remember, bullying is never your fault.
- It can be stopped and it can usually be traced.
- Don't ignore the bullying.
- Tell someone you trust, such as a teacher or parent, or call an advice line.
- Try to keep calm.
- If you are frightened, try to show it as little as possible.
- Don't get angry, it will only make the person bullying you more likely to continue.
- Don't give out your personal details online
- If you're in a chatroom, watch what you say about where you live, the school you go to, your email address etc.

All these things can help someone who wants to harm you build up a picture about you.

- Keep and save any bullying emails, text messages or images. Then you can show them to a parent or teacher as evidence.
- If you can, make a note of the time and date bullying messages or images were sent, and note any details about the sender.

Useful websites

<https://anti-bullyingalliance.org.uk/>

<https://www.kidscape.org.uk/>

<https://www.nspcc.org.uk/>

The law is on your side...

The Protection from Harassment Act, the Malicious Communications Act 1988 and Section 43 of the Telecommunications Act may be used to combat Cyber bullying. People may be fined or sent to prison for up to six months.