Anti-Bullying Policy

This Anti-Bullying Policy should be read in conjunction with the following policies:
Cyber-bullying Policy
Behaviour Policy
Safeguarding and Child Protection Policy
Code of Conduct

The school recognises that a bullying incident should be treated as a child protection concern when there is reasonable cause to believe that a child is suffering or likely to suffer significant harm. Staff are aware of the need to be extra vigilant and alert to pupils who may be vulnerable or at risk of bullying ie, those that fall under the nine protected characteristics of age, disability, gender reassignment, marriage / civil partnership, pregnancy / maternity, race, religion / belief, sex and sexual orientation.

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 (see above) or because a child is adopted or has caring responsibilities. It might be motivated by actual differences between children, or perceived differences. 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. (Preventing and Tackling Bullying: Advice for Headteachers, Staff and Governing Bodies July 2017)

Bullying means **consistent** problems with:
- Any physical violence, e.g. kicking or punching.
- Name calling, spreading rumours, hurtful teasing.
- Excluding anyone from any activity or group work.
- Ignoring or not talking to someone.
- Frightening someone into doing something they do not want to do
- Intimidation to prevent someone from doing something they want
- Invading someone's personal space to make them feel uncomfortable or unhappy
- Laughing at someone.
- Taking or damaging someone's property.
- Cyberbullying, for example: sending unpleasant e-mails and/or text messages, sexting and inappropriate use of social networking sites, gaming, web-cams, etc.
- Radicalisation - using the internet or other means to encourage young people to have extremist religious, social or political views which may support terrorism.
- Attacks or abuse because of religion, gender, sexuality, disability, appearance, ethnic or racial origin, culture, special educational needs, health conditions or circumstances related to home life such as being adopted or being a carer.

Cyberbullying

Cyberbullying may be defined as 'the use of electronic communication, particularly mobile phones and the internet, to bully a person, typically by sending messages of an intimidating or threatening nature: children and adults may be reluctant to admit to being the victims of cyberbullying'. It can take a number of different forms: threats and intimidation, harassment or 'cyber-stalking' (e.g. repeatedly sending unwanted texts or instant messages), vilification/defamation, exclusion/peer rejection, impersonation, unauthorised publication of private information/images and 'trolling' (abusing the internet to provoke or offend others online) and radicalisation. It can be an extension of face-to-face bullying, with technology providing the bully with another route to harass their target.

However it differs from other forms of bullying in several significant ways:
- by facilitating a far more extreme invasion of personal space. Cyberbullying can take place at any time and intrude into spaces that have previously been regarded as safe and personal.
- the potential for anonymity on the part of the bully. This can be extremely distressing for the victim
- the potential for the bully to play very rapidly to a larger audience so the scale and scope of cyberbullying can be greater than for other forms of bullying.
- through the knowledge that the data is in the world-wide domain, disproportionately amplifying the negative effect on the victim, even though the bully may feel his / her actual actions had been no worse than conventional forms of bullying
- the difficulty in controlling electronically circulated messages as more people get drawn in as accessories. By passing on a humiliating picture or message a bystander becomes an accessory to the bullying.
- the profile of the bully and target can be different to other forms of bullying as cyberbullying can take place between peers and across generations. Teachers can be victims and age and size are not important.
- many cyberbullying incidents can themselves act as evidence so it is important the victim saves the information.

More information on Cyberbullying can be found in the school's Cyberbullying Policy

Children who are bullied may:
- Feel frightened and demeaned
- Be unwilling to go to school.
- Begin to do poorly in school work.
- Become withdrawn and distressed.
- Have nightmares or cry themselves to sleep.
- Lose their possessions mysteriously.
- Refuse to say what is wrong.
- Give excuses to explain any of these things.
- Show aggressive behaviour.
- Lose their appetite.
- Spend a disproportionate amount of time on the internet.
- Attempt suicide

Why do we have an Anti-Bullying Policy?
National studies show that bullying occurs more than everyone might think and can cause serious psychological damage and even suicide. The aim of the Anti-Bullying Policy is to safeguard and promote the welfare of children. Bullying affects everyone, not just the bullies and their victims. It also affects those children who watch, and who can get drawn in by group pressure. If children are part of a group that makes anybody feel ashamed, unhappy or afraid, they are involved in bullying.

Bullying is not tolerated at St John's
To counteract bullying behaviours, we promote a safe environment in which the children are encouraged to discuss their feelings openly, without fear of judgment.

We endeavour to give the children the skills to identify and deal with their worries. We are pro-active in our approach to educating our pupils and staff about bullying and cyber-bullying and our aim is to create a pervasive anti-bullying culture and to build resilience in pupils to protect themselves and others by:

- speaking openly about bullying and cyberbullying
- having comprehensive internet security with the appropriate levels of filtering and by teaching the children explicitly how to stay safe in the online world.
- by acknowledging that bullying might occur outside school and that we have a duty of care to investigate any such incidents.
- having positive staff role models in terms of communication and respect. Staff need to avoid the use of prejudice based language and use all available opportunities to promote the understanding of differences between people.
- promoting and expecting positive respectful relationships between staff and pupils and older and younger pupils based on mutual respect and trust
- creating an inclusive environment and a school which builds on positive self- image and commends appropriate behavior in all areas
- ensuring staff are trained on how to watch for signs, react to and deal with instances of bullying or suspected bullying. Staff need to be particularly alert to pupils who may be vulnerable or at risk from bullying. Training will be given to staff on the needs of our pupils including those with special educational needs or disabilities
- Understanding that although bullying is defined as repeated unkindness, the school will follow up ALL incident of unkindness, using the guidelines fiund in the 'Dealing with a pastoral incident' document.
- educating the children about bullying and cyberbullying through the assemblies, E4L and PSHEE curriculum, the ICT curriculum and the Drama curriculum
- giving the children easy access to information about bullying and cyberbullying and what to do with a worry. This includes Childline posters being on display around the school, including in the boarding house, access to the independent listener for the boarders, the school's anti-bullying and cyberbullying leaflets and easy access to adults at school to whom they can talk.
- educating the children about their rights and responsibilities as members of the school community throughout their learning and discussing this at regular tutor/tutee meetings
- teaching the children that bullying and cyberbullying are intolerable and teaching them how to report bullying and cyberbullying.
- teaching children that seeing bullying happening and doing nothing (being a bystander) is effectively taking part in the bullying behaviours themselves as they are aware of it and do nothing.
- taking advantage of any opportunities to consider and discuss issues of difference and tolerance in lessons, projects, charity events and assemblies.

How parents may help:
- If your child tells you about bullying, talk with them about ways in which together you can tell the school how they are feeling and what has happened. At school we do not tolerate bullying. We will listen to them and do everything we can to remedy the situation.
- The first and most important step is to listen. Allow them to tell their story in their own words. Don't respond by dismissing their experience as part of 'growing up'.
- If your child refuses to talk to you, suggest that they talk to another adult, in their safety network or safety circle. Before they speak to their parents or teachers about being bullied, some children may phone Childline.
- If you suspect your child is being bullied or is feeling unhappy about something, please contact the Form Teacher/Tutor, Head of the Junior Department, the Deputy Head or Head, and do encourage your child to do likewise. It is important to 'tell' and talk about the problem.
- Talk to your child about what they are doing on the internet and try to keep the lines of communication open. Learn about the sites they are using and talk to your child about being safe online.

What the School Will Do

The Victim
The victim of bullying is informed of the decision with regard to the action to be taken to prevent, as far as is reasonably possible, any further occurrence.

- Arrangements are made with the child to meet with a tutor or with another member of staff to review the situation repeatedly until such time as it is felt that there is no longer a concern.
- The child is encouraged to inform a member of staff immediately should there be any repetition and a friend is sought, with the child's agreement, to speak on the child's behalf if necessary, given the difficulty that children can have in making such disclosures.
- The child's parents are, likewise, asked to inform the school if they suspect, or hear from the child of any cause for further concern.

The Perpetrator/s

The proof that a child has been bullying creates very considerable difficulties for the child and, within the overriding concern to ensure that the welfare of other children is fully protected, it is essential to avoid further damage to a child's self-esteem, particularly given that low self-esteem is itself the single most likely cause of such behaviour.

- The first concern in such circumstances is to endeavour to discover the cause of the behaviour and, with the child, to seek positive ways forward.
- Once apologies have been made, any further sanction should, if at all possible, be seen as a positive way of restoring to the community that which has been taken away by the child's actions. Doing things to help others is both good in itself and good for self-esteem.
- A clear agreement must be reached with a child about ways of avoiding such behaviour in future, including an agreement about where it is and is not appropriate to be, with whom it is and is not appropriate to be for an agreed future period. In many cases, such an agreement is best set down, by the child, in writing so that there is no uncertainty about the situation.
- There should always be a clear date for review of the situation and for the lifting of any sanctions or restrictions on a child's movement given that all is well in the interim.
- There should also be a clear indication of the consequences of any repetition of the bullying, though it should be clear that the child is not therefore going to be 'labelled' henceforth.
- Parents should be informed of all the measures being taken and should, at an early stage in the proceedings, be invited to discuss the situation so that home and school can, as far as possible, be seen by the child to be working together.
- The child's behaviour at school should be seen as such and parents should be encouraged to avoid making the school problem a home one. Having said this, it may well be that there are home issues to be addressed and it is often the case that an unhappiness outside school will translate itself into a behavioural difficulty at school. If this is the case, it is all the more important that school and home should be working together in the child's best interests.
- A serious incident of bullying will be reported to the parents by the Head, the Deputy Head or the Assistant Head Pastoral as soon as its details have been clarified. In such circumstances, and by agreement with the parents, a 'time out' for parents to discuss the situation with the child and for the child to reflect on his or her behaviour, may be desirable. While such an authorised absence will emphasise the seriousness of the situation, it is not intended as a punishment but as a genuine opportunity to reflect and move forward.
- At such a point, the Head may feel it necessary to advise the parents and the child that a further serious incident may result in temporary exclusion. If this is the case, such a warning will be given to the parents in writing.
- If at any point a criminal offence has been committed or a child is at risk of significant harm, the Designated Safeguarding Lead will following the procedures set out in the Safeguarding and Child Protection Policy (in line with the Local Safeguarding Childrens Board) and refer the matter to the police or children's social care.

Staff Training

- All staff will receive regular training on this policy which will include training on how to recognise the signs of bullying, how to support the victim and perpetrator of bullying, what support is available for children and professionals to deal with bullying and their legal responsibilities in relation to this policy.

Recording of Incidents of Bullying

- All incidents of bullying will be recorded as a safeguarding concern on MyConcern (school safeguarding software), including incidents of bullying that happen outside of school. These records will be used by

the Deputy Head/Assistant Head (Pastoral) for monitoring purposes and to evaluate the effectiveness of the approach adopted or to enable patterns to be identified.

If you have any questions, concerns or queries about the Anti-Bullying Policy and Cyberbullying Policy or bullying in general, please contact us here at St John's.

Useful Publications/Contacts for Parents:
- The Anti-Bullying Alliance
- Kidscape
- ParentZone – Keeping Children Safe Online

Cyberbullying:
- ChildNet International
- Think U Know
- Digizen
- UK Council for Child Internet Safety: Advice on Child Internet Safety
- The UK Safer Internet Centre www.saferinternet.org.uk

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