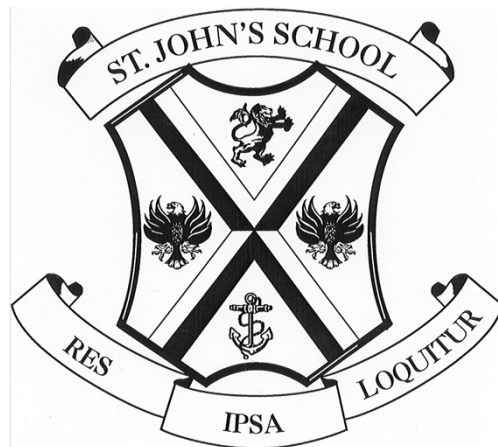


# St. John's Prep. & Senior School



## Preventing Bullying Policy

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| <b>Last reviewed by the leadership team</b> | <b>Last reviewed by the advisory board</b> |
| March 2018                                  | November 2018                              |

Preventing Bullying Policy  
(To be read in conjunction with the policy on Behaviour and Discipline.)

## 1. Introduction

St. John's Prep. & Senior School has adopted the DfE's *Preventing and Tackling Bullying (DfE 2017)* guidance.

In April 2011, the Equality Act 2010 came into force. This Act ensures discriminations (direct and indirect); harassment and victimisation are challenged to ensure equality. This policy, along with all other related policies, is written and reviewed in light of this Act to ensure the school is fulfilling its statutory duty.

Our School has a commitment to developing an effective anti-bullying culture.

Our School has a clear discipline and behaviour policy, which helps to both reduce incidences of bullying and also identify clear strategies for disciplining children who are responsible for bullying. The Discipline and Behaviour Policy should therefore be used in conjunction with this policy when addressing any issue related to bullying.

## 2. Definition

**Bullying is 'persistent and often premeditated action taken by one or more children, with the deliberate intention of either physically or emotionally hurting another child'.**

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, social media or gaming, which can include the use of images and video) and is often motivated by prejudice against particular groups, for example on grounds of race, religion, gender, sexual orientation, gender identity, special educational needs or disabilities, or because a child is adopted, in care or has caring responsibilities. It might be motivated by actual differences between children, or perceived differences.

Bullying 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.' Bullying can include one or more of the following:-

- Being hit, kicked, pinched, spat at or threatened.
- Being called names.
- Making a fool of someone.
- Teasing or sending nasty notes.
- Spreading rumours or malicious gossip about someone.
- Deliberately destroying another person's property.
- Repeatedly excluding a child or young person by not talking to them, or not letting them join in.

## **Cyber-bullying**

Technology allows the user to bully anonymously or from an unknown location, 24 hours a day, 7 days a week. Cyber bullying is highly intrusive and the hurt it causes can be very severe. Cyber bullying can include one or more of the following:-

- Text messages (including 'sexting') - that are threatening or cause discomfort.
- Picture/video clips - images sent to others to make the victim feel threatened or embarrassed.
- Mobile Phone Calls – silent calls or abusive messages; or stealing the victim's phone and using it to harass others, to make them believe that the victim is responsible.
- Emails – threatening or bullying e-mails, often sent using a pseudonym or somebody else's name.
- Chat room bullying – menacing or upsetting responses to children when they are in web-based chat room.
- Instant Messaging – unpleasant messages sent while children conduct real time conversations online
- Bullying via social media

The Head of the Senior School has placed a letter on the school website explaining to parents exactly what the effects of cyber-bullying can be and how the perpetrators will be dealt with.

Key Stage 2 ICT training introduces the children to Cyberbullying as part of the ICT curriculum. The ICT Department asks the pupils to fill in a questionnaire giving details of their unsupervised access to the web at home and a letter is sent home to remind parents of their responsibility to keep their children safe from the dangers of the internet (see Appendix A).

### **3. The Impact of Bullying**

There is growing evidence to suggest that bullying can lead to unhealthy relationships during childhood and onto adult lives, as well as risk of offending, school exclusion and involvement in gangs.

Those who are bullied:

The damage from bullying can be far reaching. Those who are subjected to it can suffer serious impairment to their self-esteem and sense of security. This may affect their ability to socialise successfully, their attainment at school, and their overall capacity for realising their personal potential. Mental ill-health, self-harm, and even suicide are linked with sufferers of persistent bullying.

Those who bully:

Children who display bullying behaviour can also be damaged by the experience. There is growing evidence to suggest that bullying can lead to involvement in gangs, being at risk of offending and school exclusion. We do not want our children to learn that force and intimidation are successful strategies for getting what they want with associated feelings of gratification.

Bystanders:

Bullying is rarely an isolated event and frequently occurs in front of other children. Children who observe bullying often find it distressing, but feel powerless to do anything about it, often for fear of being bullied themselves. Inaction by witnesses is often perceived by both the 'bully' and the bullied as colluding with the bully, or ignoring it. A setting that encourages an active stance against bullying can provide clear guidelines for children and adults who witness such behaviour. The emphasis on addressing bullying should be taken away from focusing on labelling a 'victim' or a 'bully' and should explore the role and the responsibility of all parties, including 'followers' and 'bystanders'.

#### **4. Aims and objectives**

At St. John's, we believe that any form of bullying is wrong and damages individual children. We therefore do all we can to prevent it, by developing a school ethos in which bullying is properly understood and regarded as wholly unacceptable.

At St. John's School staff, parents and children work together to create a happy, caring, safe and secure learning environment where all can learn without anxiety, and measures are in place to reduce the likelihood of bullying. 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. Research has shown time and time again that the extent of bullying in Schools is greatly underestimated.

In order to prevent cyber bullying taking place at School, we do not allow the children to bring mobile phones to the Prep School. Pupils at the Senior School are allowed to bring mobile phones to School for safety reasons when travelling to and from School. However, they are expected to be kept out of site and not used during lessons or around the School, unless permission has been granted in an emergency by their Form Teacher. The 6<sup>th</sup> form students are allowed a little more flexibility in the use of their phones, providing this is carried out discreetly. In the event of a pupil disobeying these rules, their mobile phone is confiscated for half a term and their parents are advised accordingly. In both Schools, no child is allowed to use the School's e-mail system unsupervised. A representative from CEOP, visits the School once a year to talk to all the pupils about this cyber bullying, at an age appropriate level, and how to report it.

This policy aims to produce a consistent School response to any bullying incidents that may occur. We aim to make all those connected with the School aware of our opposition to bullying, and we make clear each person's responsibilities with regard to the eradication of bullying in our School.

## **5. The role of the School**

It is the responsibility of the Headteacher to implement the School anti-bullying strategy, and to ensure that **all staff** (both teaching and non-teaching) are aware of the School policy, and know how to identify and deal with incidents of bullying.

The Headteacher ensures that all children know that bullying is wrong and that it is unacceptable behaviour. The Headteacher draws the attention of children to this fact at suitable moments. For example, if an incident occurs, the Headteacher may decide to use an assembly as the forum in which to discuss with other children why this behaviour was wrong.

The Headteacher sets the School climate of mutual support and praise for success to reduce the likelihood of bullying. When children feel they are important and belong to a friendly and welcoming School, bullying is far less likely to be part of their behaviour.

Informal communications between staff and parents are undertaken immediately a bullying issue arises. The parents of all children are spoken to, whether victim or bully. Where appropriate this is shared with other members of staff at our Head of Year meeting on Fridays at the Prep School, or during our morning briefings at the Senior School, where ways of addressing individual problems can be discussed.

## **6. The role of the teacher and support staff**

All the staff in our School takes all forms of bullying seriously and seek to prevent it from happening.

Teachers keep a record of all serious incidents that happen, whether in their class or in the wider School, on our Behaviour Watch system. If teachers witness an act of bullying, they will either investigate it themselves or refer it to the Headteacher. Teachers and support staff do all they can to support the child who is being bullied.

When any bullying takes place between members of a class, the teacher will deal with the issue immediately, following the agreed sanctions detailed in the 'Discipline and Behaviour Policy'. This may involve counselling and support for the victim of the bullying, and sanctions for the child who has carried out the bullying. Time is spent talking to the child who has bullied: explaining why his/her action was wrong, and that child is encouraged to change his/her behaviour in future. We may also take a restorative justice approach to resolve the issue where both parties are present and resolved outcomes are agreed by all. If a child is repeatedly involved in bullying other children, the Headteacher is always informed. The Headteacher will invite the child's parents into the School to discuss the situation. In more extreme cases, for example where these initial discussions have proven ineffective, the School will apply zero tolerance on the matter and the child in question will be permanently excluded.

Under the Children Act 1989 a bullying incident should be addressed as a child protection concern when there is 'reasonable cause to suspect that a child is

suffering, or is likely to suffer, significant harm'. Where this is the case, the School will report their concerns to social care services.

## **7. Curriculum**

SMSC lessons are delivered in both Prep and senior school where bullying and healthy /negative relationships are explored along with the discussing consequences if bullying or negative relationships continue.

Teachers use a range of methods to help prevent bullying and to establish a climate of trust and respect for all. They use drama, role-play, stories etc., within the formal curriculum, to help pupils understand the feelings of bullied children, and to practise the restraint required to avoid lapsing into bullying behaviour. SMSC lessons in the Prep. School, along with half-termly Awards Ceremonies, are used to praise, reward and celebrate the success of all children, and thus to help create a positive atmosphere.

Both schools have a School Counsellor who visits every month to speak to parents/pupils who ask to see her and also to deliver a programme of SMSC workshops including 'How to deal with Bullying'.

Anti-bullying week affords the Prep. School an opportunity for all pupils at Key Stage 2 to fill in a Child Line questionnaire in which they are invited to comment on their experience of bullying to date.

## **8. 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.

- Discussions at length with the victim. This will require patience and understanding. Remember – Listen, Believe, Act.
- Identify the bully/bullies. Obtain witnesses if possible. Advise the Headteacher.
- Discussions with the bully. Confront them with the details and ask them to tell the truth about the situation/incident. Make it clear that bullying is not acceptable at St. John's Prep. & Senior School.
- If they own up then follow the procedure outlined below and in the Discipline Policy.
- If they do not own up, investigate further. If it is clear that they are lying, continue with the procedure. Children usually own up if presented with all the facts.
- Separate discussions with parents of bully and victim.
- Sanctions for the bully may include withdrawal from favoured activities, letter of apology, loss of playtimes as well as attending counselling to explore their

negative behaviour, as well as to see if there are any other issues in school or at home as why the behaviour occurred and the child is acting out. Depending on the perceived severity of the incident (s) and frequency of such behaviour towards others may result being excluded from school.

- Continue monitoring the situation by observing at playtimes/lunchtimes and having discussions with victim to ensure no repetition.
- As the behaviour of the bully (hopefully) improves, then favoured activities etc. can be reinstated, and the child should be praised for good 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 identify incidents of bullying and the identities of bullies, at St. John's Prep. and Senior School we have agreed to carry out the following strategies:

- All staff watch for early signs of distress in pupils.
- All staff Listen, Believe, Act.
- SMSC. lessons in School raising these issues and dissuading children from bullying.

Any child has the right to seek counselling at school for bullying or other issues that upset their emotional wellbeing. Any child who has been bullied is offered counselling and if agreed the teacher will make the necessary referral to our school counsellor.

- Open door policy for parents to speak to the Form Teacher about problems their children are having at School.

## **9. The role of parents**

Parents who are concerned that their child might be being bullied, or who suspect that their child may be the perpetrator of bullying, should contact their child's Form Teacher immediately. If they are not satisfied with the response, they should contact the Headteacher. If they remain dissatisfied, they should follow the School's complaints procedure, as detailed in the School Prospectus.

Parents and carers should be aware of the increasing dangers of 'cyber bullying', through the sending of text messages to mobile phones or the posting of personal information or views on social networking sites, and should exercise due parental responsibility in supervising their children's use of phones and the internet. To this end, we hold a bi-annual meeting for parents with a representative of CEOP, who will explain to the parents the need for careful monitoring of their child's internet usage and the problems that can occur.

Parents have a responsibility to support the School's anti-bullying policy, actively encouraging their child to be a positive member of the School. The Home-School

Agreement in the student planners (Prep. School) provide a clear outline for parents to encourage their children to be a positive influence at the School.

## **10. The role of pupils**

Pupils are encouraged to tell anybody they trust if they are being bullied, and if the bullying continues, they must keep on letting people know. If they are being cyberbullied, they are advised to keep texts or e-mails as evidence in an investigation.

Finally, in the annual pupil questionnaire, pupils are asked for their views about a range of School issues, including bullying.

## **11. Monitoring and review**

Our Behaviour Watch system, detailing all incidents of bullying, is monitored regularly by the Deputy Head and the Headteacher. The incidents are recorded on each pupil's digital file.

Leaders analyse records held to identify any patterns involving people, places or groups. They look out in particular for incidents of bullying related to difference or perceived difference, for example, racist bullying, homophobic/biphobic/transphobic bullying or bullying directed at children with disabilities or special educational needs.

This policy will be reviewed annually or earlier if necessary.



## Appendix A

### Acceptable Use Agreement: Pupils – eSafety Rules

- ✓ I will only use ICT in School for School purposes.
- ✓ I will only open email attachments from people I know, or who my teacher has approved.
- ✓ I will not tell other people my ICT passwords.
- ✓ I will only open/delete my own files.
- ✓ I will make sure that all ICT contact with other children and adults is responsible, polite and sensible.
- ✓ I will not deliberately look for, save or send anything that could be unpleasant or nasty. If I accidentally find anything like this I will tell my teacher immediately.
- ✓ I will not give out my own details such as my name, phone number or home address. I will not arrange to meet someone offline.
- ✓ I will be responsible for my behaviour when using ICT because I know that these rules are to keep me safe.
- ✓ I know that my use of ICT can be checked and that my parent/ carer contacted if a member of School staff is concerned about my eSafety.
- ✓ I will ensure that my online activity including the use of social media/networking sites, both in School and outside School, will adhere to the School rules.
- ✓ I will ensure that I do not use a mobile device to cyber bully, take inappropriate images or send inappropriate images.
- ✓ I will not encourage other pupils to act irresponsibly on the internet or social media.
- ✓ I will not ask adults in the School to 'follow' or 'friend' me on social media.

Dear Parent/ Carer

ICT including the internet, email and mobile technologies, etc has become an important part of learning in our School. We expect all children to be safe and responsible when using any ICT.

The School is proud of its high standards and ethos. The internet and social media should not be used to share complaints about the School. When negative or inaccurate comments online are drawn to our attention, we will invite the person to discuss their concerns with the Headteacher by following our complaints procedure. Where this is not possible, the School will take legal action to remove defamatory or libellous remarks, particularly where individuals at the School are named.

Please read and discuss these eSafety rules with your child and sign the bottom of the page.

We have discussed this and .....(child's name) agrees to follow the eSafety rules and to support the safe use of ICT at St. John's School.

Parent/ Guardian Signature .....

Class ..... Date .....

Form Teacher .....