

St. John's School Policy on Anti-Bullying

Background

The Education Act 2005 requires schools to evaluate the extent to which pupils feel safe and adopt safe practices and as part of this are prompted to consider whether pupils feel safe from bullying. St. John's considers this to be an important area of school policy and evaluation and complements the policies currently in place on communication and behaviour support.

Definition

The term bullying refers to a range of sustained hurtful behaviour, whether physical, verbal or emotional that makes a pupil feel unwelcome, marginalised, excluded, powerless or worthless.

Bullying can also take the form of harassment. The Equality Act 2010 defines harassment as being 'unwanted conduct related to a relevant protected characteristic, which has the purpose or effect of violating an individual's dignity or creating an intimidating, hostile, degrading, humiliating or offensive environment for that individual'. These protected characteristics are: age, disability, race, sex, gender reassignment, religion, belief or sexual orientation.

Bullying can be aimed at pupils due to the protected characteristics above, or a range of other personal or social reasons. Bullying can occur for no apparent reason but with the same devastating effects for the young person who is victim to such behaviour.

Bullying differs from other forms of unacceptable behaviour e.g. verbal or physical aggression in that it includes the dominance of one pupil by another, or by a group of pupils. The behaviour will be pre-meditated and sustained over time. An isolated aggressive incident is not, as such, bullying within this definition.

The majority of pupils at St. John's School who may display aggressive behaviour, either physical or verbal, towards others do not do so with the malicious intent inherent with bullying as above defined, due to their severe learning disabilities.

Approach

Effective delivery of the school's curriculum can only take place where pupils attend school motivated to learn and behave well. St. John's School Behaviour Policy establishes the agreed ways in which members of the school community will contribute to the learning environment.

Pupils need security if they are to learn effectively. Part of this security is created by the behavioural expectations, morals and standards upheld by the school. Pupils are taught to recognise both appropriate and inappropriate behaviour.

The pupils' social awareness and appreciation of others feelings will be promoted through the personal, social and health curriculum (PSHE), and a significant commitment to wellbeing. Pupil's individual education plans (IEP) and behaviour support plans (BSP), where applicable, will reflect strategies to enable pupils to communicate their needs and feelings in acceptable and safe ways.

The Staff will be vigilant. They will promptly address any behaviour considered to be bullying by providing opportunities for the pupil to develop more appropriate and acceptable behaviours.

Reporting

Staff must record and report all incidents of bullying using the school's behavioural incident recording sheet. (refer to the Behaviour Support Access Document)

All allegations of bullying including those made by third parties e.g. parents/carers, transport staff etc. will be taken seriously and fully investigated by the school.

All allegations and records of bullying are reported to the Personnel & Curriculum

Committee of the Governing Body under the standing agenda item 'Pupil welfare.'

Staff will inform parents/carers if their child is a victim of bullying.

Staff training

Regular induction and refresher training on behaviour support will include reference to this policy.

Policy review

This policy will be reviewed every three years.