



St Aidan's Catholic Academy

*'We believe that God has created each person
to celebrate life to the full'*



'Where excellence is a habit'

15th November 2023

Dear Parent / Carer,

This week we are supporting the national Anti-Bullying initiative by raising awareness of bullying throughout all houses. The theme this year is 'Make a noise about bullying', with a laser sharp focus on miscommunication.

School values of hard work, trust and fairness encourage positive behaviour from all pupils at all times. The focus on miscommunication is therefore a very welcome opportunity to discuss how pupils communicate with others and how comments can be misinterpreted just by how they are said. We want our pupils to be best they can be in all areas of their development, giving them opportunities to reach own potential and purpose. With this in mind, all pupils will participate in assembly followed by activities which will be carried out by their form tutor. Our School website has information uploaded in the Anti-bullying section, which we invite you to read. A parent guide is also attached for your information.

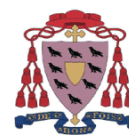
We are also taking this opportunity to inform you about how we deal with bullying and bullying type behaviour and to give you some helpful hints in the event that you feel that your son is being bullied or has participated in forms of bullying.

At St Aidan's bullying is defined as 'the deliberate abuse of power by an individual or group intended to cause distress to another individual or group, whether adult or children.' It may happen frequently or occasionally and can take many different forms:

Bullying can be:

- Emotional: being unfriendly, excluding, tormenting (e.g. hiding books, threatening gestures, damaging property, theft).
- 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, such as email, social network sites such as Facebook, gaming, such as Xbox Live, internet chat rooms, misuse of mobile devices, threats by text messaging & calls, misuse of associated technology, i.e. camera & video facilities.
- Social: because of socio-economic background.
- Educational: because of educational ability.

Bullying is damaging for both victim and perpetrators and is usually linked with secrecy and threat. It can lead to feelings of fear, misery, isolation, loneliness, powerlessness and hopelessness, as well as physical signs in the victim and a sense of power and control in the perpetrator. Therefore, bullying will not be tolerated in St Aidan's Catholic Academy and will be taken seriously.



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The advice that we give to our pupils when an incident of bullying occurs is:

- TELL someone they can trust! A problem becomes smaller if it is shared.
- WALK away if they can. It's still hard to bully someone who won't stand still.
- STAY with a crowd. Try not to be on their own at the times they don't feel safe.
- KNOW and AVOID 'danger' areas.
- KEEP a record of what is happening.
- DON'T be embarrassed to ask for help. We all need it sometimes.
- TRY to support other victims

If you feel that your son is being bullied then:

- TALK to your son on a regular basis, so any problem is easier to share.
- LISTEN to what they say - and believe it.
- ENCOURAGE your son to feel good about himself realising that we are all different and equally important.
- THINK back to your own childhood. How did YOU feel?
- IF you believe your son is being bullied or is a bully, talk to other adults at home or school and explore the options. Don't stay silent.
- IF your son is a victim assure them that it's not their fault, and that you ARE going to do something to help.
- BE realistic in your expectation if the school have agreed to sort it out. On-going problems may take time to resolve.
- TRY to be assertive with the school, not aggressive. Without a good working relationship between parents and the school the situation could deteriorate, which won't help you or them.
- ALWAYS remember that children can't solve bullying alone. They NEED support.

We deal with reports of bullying using a staged response approach:

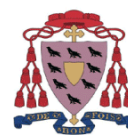
When a member of staff detects an incident of bullying or when an incident of bullying is reported to a member of staff. The stages below will be followed:

Stage 1: Information

Any pupils involved will be spoken to by a member of the relevant pastoral team and if necessary statements will be requested from other pupils or staff.

Stage 2: Investigation and Action

Action will be taken in relation to the incident and pupils involved. At this stage the Head of House will contact parents of any pupils where it is deemed appropriate.



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The incident will be logged in the school behavioural system. Recorded incidents are for school information only, however in some cases incidents of bullying may be recorded on Sunderland City Council Reporting System. This system is monitored by the Local Authority. School will facilitate a meeting between children involved in the incident in order to repair relationships and outline schools' expectations with regards to behaviour.

The Anti-bullying team and Leadership team will monitor the incidents recorded and use the information to plan or review anti-bullying interventions at school.

School staff and the anti-bullying group regularly approach the subject of bullying in assemblies, liturgies, during form time, PDE and during subject lessons.

Stage 3: Anti-Bullying Panel

If the perpetrator re-offends he is referred to the anti-bullying panel, convened by relevant Assistant Headteacher. The anti-bullying panel consists of the Assistant Head, and a Governor when possible. The panel meets with the perpetrator and parents. A home school agreement is discussed and signed. The panel decides upon the next course of action.

Stage 4: Base Camp

Persistent bullies will receive a letter from the relevant Assistant Head teacher. Pupils will spend a set period of time in Base Camp.

Stage 5: Suspension

Fixed term suspension.

Do you need help?

If you are worried about bullying and need help and advice, please contact one of the organisations below. All the organisations listed are members of the Anti-Bullying Alliance, which means that they have agreed to work together to stop bullying. This information can also be found on our website, 'Useful Info', 'Anti Bullying'.

Help for children and young people:

Childline - <http://www.childline.org.uk/>

Phone 0800 1111

NSPCC - <http://www.nspcc.org.uk/html/home/home.htm>

Phone 0808 800 5000

Help for parents or carers worried about their child being bullied:

[Parenting and Family Support - Family Lives \(Parentline Plus\)](#)

Phone 0808 800 2222

Kidscape - <http://www.kidscape.org.uk>

Other links:

Bullying Online - <http://www.bullying.co.uk/>

Yours sincerely

Mrs Hogg

Senior Assistant Head teacher



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