



Anti-bullying Policy and Procedures





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Introduction.

The Governors and Headteacher of St Aidan's Catholic Academy are committed to safeguarding the welfare of pupils and vulnerable adults. Policies and practices will be robust and contain the necessary measures to enable all staff to fulfil their roles and responsibilities with full regard to this commitment.

- a) The policies and procedures contained in this document apply to everyone who is in contact with pupils who come to St. Aidan's Catholic Academy.
- b) We each have a role to play in ensuring that the pupils in our care feel safe.
- c) We all share the responsibility to protect our pupils and that includes taking the right steps to ensure that their safety is maintained.
- d) It is our statutory obligation to follow procedures.
- e) These procedures are set down in this document.

Rationale.

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

In the context of this mission statement and our core values, St Aidan's Catholic Academy is committed to the protection, support and care of all members of the school community. We believe that the emotional, physical, mental and spiritual welfare of the pupil is paramount. In so doing, we wish to create an atmosphere where pupils and staff feel safe and secure and where they can enjoy positive and open relationships with each other. Pupils must also be able to interact with staff and with fellow pupils without prejudice.

Principles.

St Aidan's Catholic Academy is a Catholic learning community, guided by Gospel values. A living sign of this community is seen in the way we behave towards each other. Therefore, we will aim to treat all members of our community with the tolerance, love and respect, characteristic of people made in the image and likeness of God.

As a learning community we must ensure that our policies and practices minimise bullying and always help and support every member of the community. Pupils in our care should be able to excel in their learning and development in accordance with their own ability and potential. Equally, members of staff should be able to fulfil their professional duties without impediment. Therefore, our policy on anti bullying and the procedures which are in place are intended to reflect those beliefs. We are committed to sustaining a culture in which those barriers to teaching and learning that are a consequence of bullying are removed. In line with our school behaviour policy we have also adopted restorative justice in our daily routines.

In carrying out our responsibilities, all staff will seek opportunities to emphasise the message of this policy and put it into practice. Those with responsibility for assemblies, tutor team meetings, pastoral lessons, subject lessons, prayers and liturgies will ensure that the school's anti-bullying values are highlighted and practised.



Aims.

To ensure that:

- Governors, all staff, pupils and parents/carers should have an understanding of what bullying is.
- Governors, all staff, pupils and parents/carers should know what the school policy is on bullying, and follow it when bullying is reported.
- All pupils and parents/carers should know what the school policy is on bullying, and what they should do if bullying arises.
- As a school we take bullying seriously. Pupils and parents/carers should be assured that they will be supported when bullying is reported.
- Measures are put in place which prevent or address incidents of bullying.

These are:

- To establish and maintain a culture of zero-tolerance towards bullying (promoted by a poster campaign and an annual Anti-bullying week and Safer Internet Day)
- An Anti Bullying Team is in place consisting of staff, pupils and parents.
- A Parent Representative Group for Anti Bullying.
- To provide mechanisms for pupils and/or staff to report incidents of bullying (via SIMs, Pupil Support Office and Class Charts)
- To use our annual school survey to monitor incidents of bullying and evaluate impact of the measures in place.
- To extend peer mentoring and peer mediation.

Definition.

For the purpose of this policy document, the following definition of bullying will apply:

Bullying may be 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, and 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 media platforms such as facebook, internet chat room misuse.
- **Mobile threats** by text messaging & calls.
- **Misuse of associated technology**, i.e. camera & video facilities.
- **Social/familial.** Because of socio-economic background.
- **Educational.** Because of educational ability (G&T, SEN)

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.



The Online Environment

Before computers can be used in school an Acceptable User Policy must be read and completed by pupils from years 7 – 13. This is also the case for staff. These are kept on file and referred to if any misuse occurs. When using desktop computers pupils and staff agree to the AUP every time they log on. Examples of our AUPs can be found in our e safety policy.

In school each device has The Academies MDM security system installed. This includes a full filtering system when using the web but can also track and monitor the usage of each device – even when it is not on site. The relationship therefore between this policy and our e safety policy has never been more important.

Mobile phones are expected to be switched off. Inappropriate use of mobile phones also results in confiscation requiring parents to come into school to collect them. Further details can be found in The Behaviour and Learning Policy.

Members of the Leadership Team have the right to search. This applies to bags, coats, blazer and mobile phones. Regular spot checks of devices and mobile phones take place. Further details can be found in The Care and Concern Policy.

Relationship with Other Policies.

This policy should be understood and applied in conjunction with other related policies, especially Child Protection, Whistle Blowing, Confidentiality, Drug Education and Drug Related Incidents; Sex and Relationships Education, Behaviour for Learning, Online Safety policy (this policy is a live document which is regular updated).

A child friendly version of this policy has been produced by the Anti-bullying Team.

Anti-bullying Ambassadors.

The Anti-bullying team is part of Pupil Voice – One Voice. Members of the Anti-bullying team are called Anti bullying Ambassadors. This vibrant team consists of pupils, school staff, governors, parent and our school nurse.

The team meet fortnightly during enrichment time to discuss matters arising and plan for oncoming events. The team also offers group work sessions to pupils identified by Heads of Houses.

The team also is available to mentor victims of bullying and offer anti bullying advice.

How we will support victims of bullying in school.

The supportive environment which exists in school encourages all members of our community to feel confident in speaking out about bullying.

Through the use of posters, leaflets, assemblies, pastoral sessions and staff development, we will continue to raise awareness of the issue of bullying. We have identified members of staff who are available during the school day to talk to pupils who have concerns about bullying. We communicate this to pupils through the range of strategies outlined above.

Whole staff training is incorporated into Safeguarding Updates.



Our LA Anti-bullying Co-ordinator is Danika Shilliday.

We will continue to work with other agencies in school to combat bullying, e.g. community police officer, local authority behaviour management team, Advisory Consultant for PSHE and Citizenship and The Bullying Intervention Group.

How we will deal with incidents of bullying.

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

Incidents of bullying can be reported by pupils to any member of staff or to any member of the Anti-bullying group or The Academy App. Members of staff detecting bullying situation are responsible to investigate or alert Pastoral Team as soon as possible to allow an opportunity to investigate the situation. Parents can report the incidents of bullying via telephone, The Academy App, e-mail or in person. 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.

A letter of apology should be written to the victim if the pastoral team deems it appropriate. Every person involved will be approached with care and understanding for their individual and or family circumstances.

The incident will be logged in the school behavioural system Class Charts as NAME CALLING or BULLYING. 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 restorative meeting between children involved in the incident in order to repair relationships and outline schools' expectations with regards to bullying incidents.

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, PDE and during subject lessons. School frequently invites motivational speakers where whole year groups have an opportunity to learn from that person's experience.

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 Senior Assistant Head, Deputy Head teacher, 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: Inclusion Zone

Persistent bullies will receive a letter from the relevant Assistant Headteacher. Pupils will spend a set period of time in Room 303. This gives time for reflection to occur and to help modify behaviour.



Stage 5: Suspension

Fixed term suspension

*Suspension may be issued before Stage 3 for some incidents. This is at the discretion of the head teacher.

How we will recognise incidents of bullying

Signs and Symptoms.

A pupil may indicate by signs or behaviour that he is being bullied. Adults, at home and in school, should be aware of these possible signs and that they should investigate if a child:

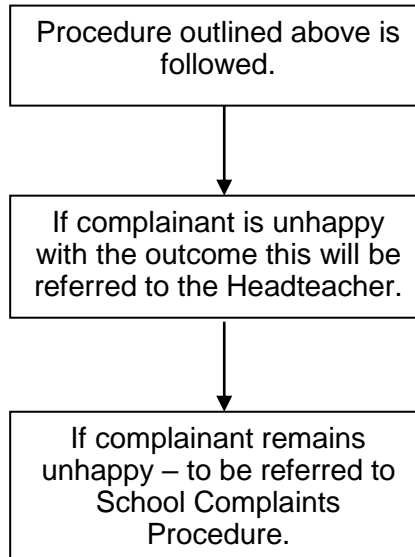
- is frightened of walking to or from school
- does not want to go to school on the bus
- begs to be driven to school
- changes his usual routine
- is unwilling to go to school (school phobic)
- is unwilling to do homework
- begins to truant
- becomes withdrawn anxious, or lacking in confidence
- starts stammering or self harming
- attempts or threatens suicide or runs away
- cries himself to sleep at night or has nightmares
- feels ill in the morning
- underperforms in school work
- comes home with clothes torn or books damaged
- has possessions which are damaged or "go missing"
- asks for money or starts stealing money (to pay bully)
- has dinner or other monies continually "lost"
- has unexplained cuts or bruises
- comes home starving (money / lunch has been stolen)
- becomes aggressive, disruptive or unreasonable
- is bullying other pupils or siblings
- stops eating
- is frightened to say what is wrong with him
- gives improbable excuses for any of the above
- is afraid to use the internet or mobile phone
- is nervous/jumpy when a cyber message is received
- change in mood / behaviour (may be angry)
- becomes socially withdrawn.

These signs and behaviours could indicate other problems, but bullying should be considered a possibility and should be investigated.



Complaints Procedure

A copy of the complaint's procedure can be obtained from the school website. This document contains the step by step process that will be taken.



Help Organisations

Anti-bullying Co-ordinator (Danika Shilliday)
Cassaton House
Fawcett Street
Sunderland

Links

Sunderland Anti Bullying website
www.yourhealthsunderland.com/anti-bullying

The advice outlines the government's approach to bullying, schools' legal obligations, the principles underpinning effective anti-bullying strategies and lists some specialist sources of information and resources

Impact Anti Bullying Service 0191 566 0622/0191565 6708
37 West Sunnyside
Sunderland
SR1 1BU
enquiriesantibullying@impactfs.co.uk

Advisory Centre for Education (ACE) 0808 800 5793
Children's Legal Centre 0191 345 4345
KIDSCAPE Parents Helpline (Mon-Fri, 10-4) 0845 1205 204
Parentline Plus 0808 800 2222
Youth Access 020 8772 9900
Bullying Online www.bullying.co.uk
NSPCC 0800 800 500

Visit the Kidscape website www.kidscape.org.uk for further support, links and advice.



Anti-Bullying Charter Mark

A 'Platinum' Anti bullying Charter Mark was awarded to St Aidan's Catholic Academy in June 2020. This will be reassessed during 2024 – 2025.

Policy Review

This policy document will be reviewed in June 2025.

Signed by:

Dr C Emmerson
June 2024
Chair of Governors