ANTI-BULLYING POLICY

Date Ratified by Board of Governors: **11/9/23**

Date of Review: **11/9/25**

1. MISSION STATEMENT
Shaping Knowledge, Shaping Futures

Our school aims to consider the uniqueness and individual needs of its pupils by delivering a broad, balanced differentiated and relevant curriculum. Each child is considered as a whole person developing skills, concepts and attitudes necessary for the opportunities and experiences of the future. We aim to prepare children to reach their full potential as responsible citizens. Our school aspires to value everyone associated with it, irrespective of age, position, race, gender, background or ability. We endeavour to motivate, support and inspire personal, spiritual, emotional and educational growth in a safe and secure environment. We aim to unite parents, pupils, governors, staff, support officers and the local community, through agreed school policies, which aim to deliver a quality educational service.

Our Anti-Bullying policy at St John's Eglish is one which is reflective of our mission statement. By containing the words safe environment in our mission statement, it is imperative that as a school we are opposed to bullying and do not tolerate it in any form. We wish to help children grow and develop in a way in which they contribute to the common good in a manner which is loving and respectful of others.

2. AIMS AND OBJECTIVES OF OUR ANTI-BULLYING POLICY
- We believe that all children have the right to learn in an environment, which is free from intimidation and fear.
- Accordingly, we will work to create an environment within which positive relationships will be fostered and violent behaviour of any sort will be unacceptable.
- Within such an environment, bullying behaviour will not be tolerated.
- Should bullying occur, the needs of victims of bullying will be paramount, and the school will take all reasonable measures to ensure that the situation is resolved and will not reoccur.
- The school will seek to involve and inform parents in all areas of its anti-bullying work.

3. LEGISLATION AND GUIDANCE
This policy is informed and guided by the following current legislation:
- Health and Safety at Work NI Order 1978 The Children (Northern Ireland) Order 1995
- The Human Rights Act 1998
- The Education (Northern Ireland) Order 1998 Article 3 – see DE 1998/25
- Welfare and Protection of Pupils Education and Libraries (NI) Order 2003
- The Education (2006 Order) (Commencement No 2) Order (NI) 2007
- The Education (School Development Plans) Regulations (Northern Ireland) 2010
- Addressing Bullying in Schools Act (Northern Ireland) 2016

and DE Guidance:
- Pastoral Care in Schools: 'Promoting Positive Behaviour' DE 2001
- Safeguarding and Child Protection in Schools. A Guide for Schools DE 2017 – to be read in conjunction with: Co-operating to Safeguard Children and Young People in Northern Ireland, Dept. of Health, Social Services and Public Safety 2016
- Safeguarding Board for Northern Ireland's (SBNI) Policies and Procedures 2017
- Addressing Bullying in Schools Act (Northern Ireland) 2016 Statutory Guidance for Schools and Boards of Governors 2019

Duties placed on Board of Governors and Principals as a result of current legislation and guidance:
In considering legislation and guidance, the Governors of St John's Eglish P.S. will:
- Secure a preventative, responsive and anti-bullying ethos, in association with other relevant policies, to ensure a safe, inclusive, happy, organised and engaging school environment.
- Have overall responsibility for ensuring the Anti Bullying Policy is in place and updated every two years.
- Keep a 'Record of Incidents' of all incidents of bullying or alleged bullying involving a registered pupil/s at the school.
- Support the Principal in following the guidelines and practices agreed in the policy.
- Monitor and evaluate the effectiveness of strategies promoted in the policy.
- Support the principal in following the guidelines and practices agreed in the policy.
- Consult with the school community on the general principles and practices reflected in the policy.

To ensure the above are carried out effectively the Board of Governors will ensure:
- Anti-bullying will be a standing item in meetings.
- To consider the views/feedback of the school community in relation to anti bullying to inform and guide whole school development planning with regards to targets, success criteria and outcomes.

The Principal will:
- Ensure this policy and associated policies are implemented consistently throughout the school.
- Facilitate any necessary staff development in relation to behaviour management and anti-bullying.

4. DEFINITION OF BULLYING
Definition of 'bullying'
'Addressing Bullying in Schools Act (Northern Ireland) 2016':
1. (1) In this Act "bullying" includes (but is not limited to) the repeated use of:
(a) Any verbal, written or electronic communication,
(b) Any other act, or

(c) Any combination of those,
by a pupil or a group of pupils against another pupil or group of pupils, with the intention
of causing physical or emotional harm to that pupil or group of pupils.
(2) For the purposes of subsection (1), "act" includes omission.

5. UNACCEPTABLE BEHAVIOURS
The school has identified the following types of unacceptable, anti-social behaviours which will constitute bullying behaviour once the above features are clearly in evidence:

PHYSICAL UNACCEPTABLE ANTI-SOCIAL BEHAVIOURS	VERBAL UNACCEPTABLE ANTI-SOCIAL BEHAVIOURS	INDIRECT UNACCEPTABLE ANTI-SOCIAL BEHAVIOURS (OMISSION)
Includes jostling, physical intimidation, interfering with personal property, punching, kicking, any other physical contact which may include use of weapons.	Includes: name calling, insults, jokes, threats, lies, spreading rumours, trying to make pupils dislike another.	Includes isolation, refusal to work with/play with/help others

THEMED UNACCEPTABLE BEHAVIOURS	
CYBER Through technology such as mobile phones and internet	**DISABILIST** (Anti-social behaviours related to perceived or actual disability)
ETHNIC/RACIST Related to skin colour, culture and religion	**SECTARIAN** Related to religious belief and/or political opinion

We recognise that these themes may be inter-related and this not an exhaustive list and other behaviours which fit with the definition may be considered bullying behaviour.

6. SIGNS OF STRESS IN PUPILS WHICH MAY INDICATE BULLYING
The following signs may indicate that a child is the target of bullying behaviour:
- Unwillingness to attend school/lateness/erratic attendance.
- Avoidance, hanging back from playground or staying late at school.
- Deterioration of work or mislaid books, money, equipment or belongings/under achievement.
- Spurious illness/nonspecific pains, headaches, tummy upsets, withdrawn, loss of appetite.
- Nail biting/flinching/jumpiness/forgetfulness/distractibility.
- Impulsive hitting out/out of character temper, flare up or restlessness/sudden aggressiveness.
- Stresses manifested at home- bed wetting/insomnia/nightmares/restlessness and irritability.
- Reluctance to sit beside or near certain pupils/hesitant to walk home.

Whilst these behaviours may be symptomatic of other problems, bullying may be identified as a possible cause.

7. STRATEGIES TO PREVENT OR REDUCE BULLYING - PROMOTING WHOLE SCHOOL WELL-BEING

Our school has established and will maintain a restorative ethos to prevent and reduce bullying behaviour.

A restorative ethos:
- Is about developing, maintaining and repairing positive relationships among and between all members of the school community.
- Is about helping young people (and adults) learn and develop the skills to make good choices now and throughout their lives – if we've learned these skills, they can be taught.
- Enables us to acknowledge when we have harmed someone and think about what to do to put it right.
- Encourages us to consider our feelings and those of others (emotional well-being).
- Encourages us all to consider our behaviour and the effect it has on others.

To ensure our restorative ethos is maintained we use the following proactive strategies:

- Ensure that all staff (teaching and non-teaching), parents/carers and pupils and all members of the school community are aware of the school Code of Conduct as set out in the Positive Behaviour Policy.
- All school staff (teaching and non-teaching), parents/carers and pupils will be familiar with the Anti-Bullying Policy and procedures for dealing with reports of bullying behaviour.
- Awareness raising posters will be displayed in classrooms and corridors. Appropriate leaflets and literature will be provided for the children.
- Children will be encouraged in PDMU classes to understand their roles in preventing bullying using, for example, drama, role-play and novels. Children will be guided to understand the feelings of bullied children and to practise the skills they need to avoid bullying behaviour.
- We will always promote the School Ethos (as regards Bullying Behaviour we will be a TELLING/LISTENING/RESPONDING school).
- Always ensure vigilant supervision in the playground and general school environment.
- Ensure awareness of Rights and Responsibilities.
- Recognise and reward good behaviour.
- Incorporate creative learning to enhance social and emotional skills in PDMU and Circle Times.
- Enable pupils to develop personal strategies to resist unwanted behaviour.
- Use of School assemblies to address Bullying Behaviour and provide Anti-Bullying Strategies.
- Consult with School Council.

- Promotion of Playground Buddy Scheme.
- Participate in NIABF Anti-Bullying Week.
- Participate in eSafety Day.
- Use of annual whole school Questionnaires and pupil playground audits.
- Ensure good parental communication.
- Awareness raising e.g., P1 Parent Induction meetings, class information meetings, newsletters, website.
- Use of outside agencies – NSPCC, Child-line, Women's Aid, PSNI, Behaviour Support Team.
- Staff training/effective communication.

8. PROCEDURES FOR RESPONDING TO INCIDENTS OF BULLYING

Staff and Governors will adopt the processes and procedures outlined in Department of Education recommended resource, Effective Responses to Bullying Behaviour (Northern Ireland Anti-Bullying Forum) as highlighted below.

When an incident of alleged bullying behaviour is reported, staff will carry out the following procedures:

<u>**We have a Bullying Concern:**</u>

(a) **Gather** and **clarify** the facts and perceptions.
   Check:
   - That the behaviour constitutes bullying behaviour as defined on Page 4 Paragraph 4 of this policy.
   - School records for any previous incidents.
   Identify:
   - The theme of the incident.
   Complete:
   - Class Behaviour Logbook.

(b) **Identify** the Intervention Level (See Paragraph 9 below).
Based on this initial assessment, to help the pupil presenting bullying behaviour change his/her unacceptable behaviour and to strengthen the target of bullying behaviour, staff will:
   - Identify the Intervention Level
   - Consider the possible need for:
      ➢ involvement of parents/carers
      ➢ Involvement of the Special Educational Needs Coordinator (SENCO)
      ➢ A Risk Assessment
      ➢ Involvement of External Agencies e.g., Child Protection Support Services for Schools (CPSS).
   - Apply and record the actions taken and the outcomes achieved.

(c) **Monitor** and **evaluate** the effectiveness of the chosen interventions.

(d) **Review** the outcome and reflect on learning to determine whether further action is required and proceed accordingly.
The following are important factors when managing a bullying situation:
- **Be calm**
   o It is important to be clear thinking and emotionally in control.
- **Be positive**
   o Have in mind the importance of maintaining a positive relationship with the pupil. A pupil is much more likely to modify his/her behaviour if he/she perceives that a teacher cares.
- **Be assertive**
   o Staff should directly and clearly express their thoughts, feelings and expectations concerning the need for the pupil to not only stop bullying, but also make restitution with the child who has been bullied.
- **Be confident**
   o It is important to trust that you will be successful in implementing practices that can have an impact on the pupil's future behaviour. It is always helpful to focus on the behaviour, not the pupil.

9. STRATEGIES TO DEAL WITH BULLYING BEHAVIOUR

When dealing with bullying behaviour the school will aim to:

1. Protect and support the child who has been bullied
2. Change the attitude and behaviour of the child who is displaying bullying behaviour.

The school will follow guidance in the Department of Education recommended resource, Effective Responses to Bullying Behaviour (Northern Ireland Anti-Bullying Forum).

When facts and perceptions have been clarified (see (a) above) the school will identify the Intervention Level (b) and act accordingly to protect and support the child being bullied and to change the attitude and behaviour of the child who is displaying bullying behaviour. The levels are:

Level 1 -Low Level Bullying Behaviours

At St John's Eglish Primary School the following interventions for Level 1 bullying behaviour may be used:

- Reminder of pupil's Rights or Rule Reminder Script i.e., right to mutual respect, right to be always safe and secure, 'Keep hands, feet, objects and unkind words to yourself.'
- Identification of possible consequences should the bullying behaviour continue.
- Point out the level of distress experienced by the bullied pupil.
- Talk with the pupil being bullied to explore how they feel the situation may best be rectified.
- Help the bullied pupil to identify ways in which he/she may be strengthened and supported e.g., peer support.
- Encourage reparation to be made if appropriate.
- Monitor the situation carefully.
- Be prepared to intervene with a higher response level if the situation persists or deteriorates.

(See p31-32 Effective Responses to Bullying Behaviour, NIABF)

Level 2-Intermediate Level Bullying Behaviours

Interventions at Level 2 may comprise part of an Individual Behaviour Support Plan. These may include:

- Quality Circles involving 6-8 pupils
- Support Group Method
- The Fogging Exercise
- The targeted pupil keeping a logbook

(See p33-34 Effective Responses to Bullying Behaviour, NIABF)

Level 3- Complex Bullying Behaviours

These interventions will often involve the Pastoral Coordinator, SENCO, and other senior managers, in collaboration with pupil(s) and parents/carers to determine the way forward in affecting change.

Interventions may include:

- Individual pupil intervention
- Parental involvement
- Method of Shared Concern

(See p35-36 Effective Responses to Bullying Behaviour, NIABF)

Level 4- High Risk Bullying Behaviours

Interventions will be coordinated by the Pastoral Coordinator/SENCO/Designated Teacher for Child Protection in collaboration with pupil(s) and parents/carers to determine the way forward in affecting change. Advice and support will be provided by the school's Child Protection Officer and may include reference to the relevant investigative agencies i.e., PSNI, Health and Social Care Trust, Gateway Teams. It may be necessary to invoke procedures outlined in the DE scheme for the Suspension and Expulsion of pupils

(See p37-38 Effective Responses to Bullying Behaviour, NIABF)

10. SANCTIONS TO USE ALONGSIDE SUPPORT PROVISION

Pupils who display bullying behaviour as outlined in the agreed definition (Page 4 Paragraph 4) can expect the following SANCTIONS to be applied:
- Immediate checking including verbal and non-verbal individual and public indications of disapproval in addition to referral to Principal if appropriate.
- Loss of privileges such as school visits, membership of school teams or being allowed to play with others at break or dinner time for a specified period.
- Continued bullying will lead to parents being notified and any further incident will lead to a meeting with the child and parents. At this meeting a final written warning will be issued stating that any further offences will result in an initial 5-day suspension from school.
- In very extreme cases or where other sanctions have been seen not to produce the desired change in behaviour, a child may be suspended from school for further periods of up to 5 days at a time, up to 45 days within one school year. Both the Board of Governors and the Chief Executive of the Southern Education and Library Board will be informed of this action.
- A record of persistent offenders and serious offences will be recorded in the Behaviour Log kept by each teacher.

11. INDIVIDUAL RESPONSIBILITIES

All members of the school community have a key role in promoting, implementing and supporting this Anti-Bullying Policy. It is important that there is a collaborative whole school approach to address any difficulties which may be encountered. Everyone should work together to create a safe, happy and anti-bullying environment.

Staff should always:
- Provide a safe, secure and caring environment.
- Promote and sustain good behaviour.
- Listen to all reports of bullying behaviour.
- Address each situation in line with procedures.

- Work collaboratively with all relevant members of the school community, developing positive partnerships with parents.

Pupils should always:
- Work in partnership with the school.
- Report all incidents of bullying behaviour immediately (if a child is the target of bullying behaviour – TELL SOMEONE).
- Follow the school's Code of Conduct.
- Avoid inappropriate behaviour which might be considered as bullying behaviour.
- Be respectful and supportive to others.
- When interventions are put in place it is expected that pupils will cooperate in using these to ensure success.

Parents/carers should always:
- Work in partnership with the school.
- Advise their children to report any concerns immediately to a member of staff.
- Discourage behaviours which might be considered as bullying behaviour.
- Stress to their children that retaliation is not helpful.
- Contact the School to arrange an appointment with the child's class teacher to discuss concerns.
- Co-operate with the school. If their child is accused of bullying behaviour, try to ascertain the truth and point out the implications of this behaviour, both for themselves and the target.
- When interventions are put in place it is expected that parents will cooperate in using these to ensure success.

12. LINKS WITH OTHER POLICIES
This Anti-Bullying Policy is set in the context of our Pastoral Care Programme and reflects our Mission Statement. It links with other policies such as:

Child Protection	Positive Behaviour	eSafety
Special Educational Needs	Health & Safety	

13. RACE EQUALITY AND EQUAL OPPORTUNITIES
All children have equal access to the curriculum regardless of their race, gender, disability or ability. Teachers plan work that is differentiated so that all groups and individuals can achieve their potential and are committed to creating a positive climate that will enable everyone to work, free from racial intimidation and harassment.

14. MONITORING AND EVALUATION OF THIS POLICY
This policy was formulated by St John's Eglish PS following consultation with School Governors, staff, pupils and parents/carers.

The policy outcomes will be specifically monitored and tracked by the Principal:

Bi-Annually
Review of Anti-Bullying Policy

Termly
Consult with School Council
Run Playground Audit, analyse responses and deal with issues raised

As Necessary
Record bullying behaviour in SIMS
Monitor Individual Behaviour Plans
Consult with staff, pupils, parents /carers
Carry out a post incident Policy Review

While the Principal has overall responsibility for overseeing these procedures and reporting back to Governors on the effective implementation and maintenance of the policy, it is important to remember that staff, pupils and parents all have an active part to play.

This policy has been approved by the Board of Governors.

15. USEFUL WEBSITES AND TELEPHONE NUMBERS

Department of Education   www.deni.gov.uk
Northern Ireland Anti Bullying Forum   www.niabf.org.uk
Child-line NI   08001111
NSPCC   08088005000