

St John's RC Primary School



Equality Policy

Reviewed: October 2013

Rationale:

Equality of opportunity at St John's Primary School means we are committed to providing equality and excellence for all so that we can promote the highest possible standards of achievement. Equality of opportunity applies to all members of our school community: pupils, staff and parents whatever her/his race, ethnicity, background, religion, gender, special or learning need, disability or special ability.

We are committed to advancing equality of opportunity for all and we work actively towards eliminating all forms of bullying and discrimination.

We recognise the effects that bullying and discrimination can have on pupils' feelings of worth, on their school work and in the community. We actively foster good relations between diverse groups and individuals.

We recognize that certain individuals and groups in society experience disadvantage, prejudice or discrimination on account of their age, disability, ethnicity, gender, gender change, looked-after status, pregnancy or maternity, religion or belief, sexual orientation and socio economic status or any combination of these.

Our School Aims in Equality

We respect the equality of each person and the dignity with which they are endowed.

We believe that each person is created in God's image and likeness and that each human life should be cherished and nurtured.

Our School Mission Statement:

As a Catholic School we strive to create and develop a community of Faith based on the values and teachings of the Gospel. We work to promote an inclusive and welcoming ethos in which there is mutual respect, love, and understanding of the beliefs of others.

We want children at St John's to be nurtured, happy, safe and secure. We want them to be able to work and play together in a harmonious way.

We encourage good behaviour where children and adults work together and care for the environment in which they live. We endeavour to work in partnership with parents and carers, our parishes and the wider community, encouraging our children to grow spiritually, academically, personally and socially.

We also want to foster in our learners the skills and dispositions which will enable them to develop the four capacities of Curriculum for Excellence as successful learners, responsible citizens, effective contributors and confident individuals.

We as a staff, are committed to the principle of lifelong learning and aim to foster this in all our learners. We aim to promote the highest standards of teaching and learning, through a broad and balanced curriculum, setting high expectations for all whilst ensuring each individual learner is encouraged to reach his or her full potential.

We strive for excellence in all we do.

Background:

St John's has 386 pupils, with many different languages spoken as a main language in the home.

Within St John's RC Primary equality permeates our whole curriculum but is taught specifically through our Religious Education Programme "*This is our Faith*" and through our Health and Wellbeing programmes. These programmes incorporate Global Citizenship Education, Creating Confident Kids, Anti-racism education and Emotions Talk.

Our Responsibilities:

The Headteacher is responsible for the implementation of this policy however all staff, pupils and their parents have an active part to play in the development, maintenance and success of the policy.

Staff are expected to be proactive, to treat all allegations seriously.

Pupils are expected to help by:

- Reporting all incidents of bullying and suspected incidents that other children may be afraid to report
- Support each other and to seek help to ensure that everyone feels safe, and nobody feels excluded or afraid in school

Parents can help by:

- Supporting our anti-bullying policy and procedures
- Encouraging their children to be positive members of the school community
- Discussing with their child's teacher any concerns that their child may be experiencing
- Helping to establish an anti-bullying culture outside of school
- Speaking to the Headteacher if their concerns are serious and ongoing.

The School Management Teams is expected to:

- Monitor and report annually on the implementation of this policy
- Supervise the review and updating of this policy at least every four years

Definitions: Bullying

Bullying is an abuse of power that is defined by its effects. People who are bullied are upset by something someone else has done or said to them or about them. They are likely to fear that this will happen again and feel powerless to stop it. Bullying is also a breach of children's rights under several articles of the Convention on the rights of the Child. Cyber-bullying is bullying behaviour that takes place via mobile phone or over the internet through emails, instant messaging and social networking websites.

Bullying can make people feel frightened, left out and hurt. Something only needs to happen once for them to feel worried or scared to go to school or other places you enjoy going to. Just because someone doesn't realise how hurtful their behaviour is doesn't mean it's not bullying.

Equalities

We use the legal definition of 'equalities' which gives protection to people who have specific characteristics –for example sexual orientation, or from a minority ethnic group, disabled or old. It also includes boys and girls and anyone undergoing gender change, as well as those of particular faith groups.. The equality Act 2010 defines these as 'protected groups'. Looked-after children, young carers and children and young people from poor backgrounds are also included as equalities groups.

Concerns, ComplaintsAnd Compliments

We aim to resolve all issues of bullying that do come to our attention and we work in partnership with our parents to help us achieve this. However if either the staff or Headteacher cannot resolve these concerns informally, parents can raise their concerns more formally through the school's complaints procedure

- A written communication to the Headteacher explaining the concern
- An appointment to meet with the Headteacher to discuss this concern. If early resolution at this stage is not achieved, then the matter can be referred to the Department's Advice and Conciliation Service.

We are also very pleased to receive compliments – feedback from parents/carers when things have gone well.

Communicating this Policy

- We advertise our anti-bullying, equality and diversity policy on the school website
- We share our policy with our pupils and explain to them what they should do if they are being bullied, or if they see someone else being bullied.
- We have Anti- Bullying assemblies and follow the national Anti Bullying Week
- All P6/7 participate in the annual Safe from Bullying survey. The school receive feedback of pupil response.
- Evaluating and reviewing our policy:

We evaluate this policy using the following measures:

- The number of incidents that are reported to staff over a given period.
- From the comments made to our staff by parents
- Pupils perceptions of bullying from class work and from periodic questionnaires
- We investigate patterns of absence to ensure that children are not taking unnecessary days off school due to fear of being bullied.
- The number of complaints and compliments that we receive from parents
- From the comments made by visitors and other people connected with the school
- The policy and procedures will be reviewed every 4 years

Procedures

Prevention

We remind pupils at least twice a year about how our school deals with bullying, including cyberbullying with parental workshops.

Periodic poster campaigns are used to remind pupils that bullying and discrimination are not acceptable

We involve other agencies and partners in health , police and the voluntary sector.

Training opportunities are promoted to staff and parents that explore the development of attachment, empathy, resilience and problem-solving skills

We have a buddy system in school to support our younger pupils.

Our P7 pupils take on responsibilities such as house captains and vice captains.

The school supports emotion talks groups

Children in our school experience Class Meetings and circle time which are used to share feelings and concern

Children also experience one to one teacher/pupil to share concerns with their teacher.

Pupils are involved in our Anti Bullying focus week in school during November

Our staff are supported in accessing professional development opportunities that increase their awareness and understanding of bullying, prejudice and discrimination

The Curriculum for Excellence is used to:

- Increase knowledge of children's rights and responsibilities as responsible citizens
- Provide age-appropriate reading materials and resources that provide a balanced diversity
- Monitor and improve where needed the attainment and achievement of pupils in protected groups to develop successful learners.
- Ensure that children and young people in protected groups are appropriately included in developing pupil participation as effective contributors.
- Build resilience and empathy in young people as confident individuals.
- Raise awareness about bullying and our Equality, Diversity and Anti-Bullying Policy across a range of school subjects.

What we do when bullying occurs:

Pupils who experience bullying or discrimination will be listened to and supported.

Pupils who engage in bullying behaviour or discrimination will be treated fairly and consistently using a range of measures.

Some of our strategies include:

- Using restorative approaches to encourage pupils to regulate their own behaviour, including acknowledging grievances
- Involving the pupils parents/carers whenever appropriate
- Using positive behaviour strategies
- Involving other agencies and partners in health where appropriate
- Sanctions, including loss of privileges and Golden Time
- Assessment of additional support needs for person being bullied or person bullying.
- Referral to specific support service eg, School Health Team if appropriate

We support our pupils who are being bullied by:

- Assuring them that it was right to report the incident
- Encouraging them to talk about the incident and how they feel
- Engaging them in making choices about how the matter may be resolved
- Discussing strategies about how to be safe and stay safe
- Informing their parents/carers so that the school can work in partnership to support the bullied pupil.
- Encouraging them to report any further incidents immediately and identifying who they can go to.
- Letting them know that bullying can be stopped and that we will persist with intervention until it does.
- Following up with the pupil to ensure that they have support and to encourage them to discuss any issues connected with the bullying.

We work with pupils who bully others by:

- Speaking separately to those pupils involved.
- Listening to their version of events and talking to anyone else who may have witnessed the bullying.
- Reinforcing the message that bullying is not acceptable, that we expect it to stop and seeking a commitment to this.
- Affirming that it is right for pupils to let us know when they are being bullied.
- Considering sanctions under our school positive behaviour policy

- Informing the pupils who are bullying that we will follow up our actions to ensure that the bullying has stopped and let those involved know this
- Contacting parents/carers at an early stage to inform them of the situation
- Following up incidents to ensure that the bullying has stopped,
- Supporting pupils to ensure that they are aware of the results of their actions and to ensure that they do not bully again.

Reporting and Recording Incidents:

Pupils who have been bullied should report this to an adult. Pupils who see others being bullied should report this to an adult. Members of staff who receive reports that a pupil has been bullied should report this to a member of SMT. Reports of bullying are logged by SMT.

All incidents are recorded and acts of bullying or discrimination on grounds of race, disability, gender, faith and sexual orientation are of equal concern and are all clearly distinguishable.

We send annual reports of incidents to our departmental equalities colleagues on request.

Cyberbullying and Bullying Outside the School Premises:

We know that bullying can occur outside the school gates and via mobile phones and social network internet sites. The bullying may be done by pupils from our own school, by pupils from other schools or by people who are not at school at all. Where a pupil or parent tells us of bullying off the school premises we will:

- Talk to pupils about how to avoid or handle bullying outside of school
- Talk to the Head Teacher of another school whose pupils are allegedly bullying
- Consider additional support,-police involvement and Child Protection procedures.

Planning

We examine and use all available information to ensure that the promotion of equality and anti-bullying issues are contained within our Mission Statement and Aims.

Equality Impact Analysis

When reviewing or creating any new policies or services within our school, we give due regard to all protected groups and consider whether any individual or group might experience a particularly positive or negative impact. We keep a record of this and where necessary we take steps to reduce any negative impact.

Involvement

We actively encourage all of our pupils to participate in school and extra-curricular activities and we take positive action to make sure that the diverse school population is represented in activities, surveys and our pupil council.

Gathering and Monitoring Information

Our school monitors attainment of pupils by ethnicity and gender

We also monitor attendance of pupils by ethnicity, disability and gender

We examine our annual records of incidents and survey information.

We use information from surveys of pupils' views and opinions.

We take active steps to ensure that all data held on pupils' disabilities, ethnicity, caring and looked-after status is accurate and regularly reviewed

Related Resources and Policies:

- Creating Confident Kids
- Additional Support for Learning Policy
- Positive Behaviour Policy
- Child Protection Policy / Procedures
- CEC Complaints Policy
- Respectme: Scotland's Anti-Bullying resource www.respectme.org.uk
- Emotion Talks CEC