

Saints and Scholars Integrated Primary School and Nursery Unit



Anti-Bullying Practice and Policy

SIGNATURE _____ Chair of Board of Governors

Date _____

SIGNATURE _____ Principal

Date _____

Updated December 2016/ April 2019

Parent/ Staff/ Pupils Consultation June 2021

Anti-Bullying Practice and Policy.

Section 1 – Introduction and Statement

Our vision statement is:

“At Saints and Scholars our vision is to create a friendly and welcoming school environment which continues to meet the needs of the community for an integrated educational choice and where through our commitment to excellence and nurturing of the individual, each child can achieve their full potential.”

Therefore, at Saints and Scholars Integrated Primary School we are completely opposed to bullying and will not tolerate it. It is entirely contrary to the values and principles by which we work and live. All members of the school community have a right to work in a secure and caring environment. They also have a responsibility to contribute, in whatever way they can, to the protection and maintenance of such an environment. The school aims to foster values of tolerance and mutual respect through promoting the self-esteem of all members of the school community. In Saints and Scholars IPS Armagh bullying is contrary to the school ethos. We recognise that bullying is a concern for all of us, including pupils, non-teaching staff, parents and governors.

Introduction

Saints and Scholars IPS repudiates bullying behaviour of any kind to any member of the school community, by any member of the school community. At Saints and Scholars IPS we believe all forms of bullying behaviour are unacceptable. We believe that all pupils have the right to learn in a safe and supported environment.

This Policy is not merely a list of regulations and sanctions but is also a statement of the school's values and beliefs and is intended to indicate to all Stakeholders the expected standards of behaviour in our School; how Parent/Guardians can help their child/children and the sanctions which may be employed should misbehaviour occur. In addition, it is also hoped that the policy statement will help everyone connected to our School to better understand the ethos, which underpins life in our school.

For an organisation to function and achieve its aims there is always a need for some form of

accepted standards of behaviour and rules. To maintain this there is a need for a system of discipline. Discipline is the system and ethos which aims to cultivate in pupils an acceptance of, and recognition for rules, responsibility for their own decisions, their actions and their consequences. Good discipline practices create the conditions for effective learning and help to develop in children responsible attitudes and values for life.

The maintenance of good discipline is an essential part of school life. “Good Behaviour” is necessary for effective learning and teaching to take place and is in turn something that society expects education to attempt to develop in our young people. All pupils at Saints and Scholars IPS are therefore expected to behave in a responsible manner, both to themselves, to others and to the environment, showing consideration, courtesy and respect for others at all times. To achieve our goal, we feel that parents must work in partnership with all Staff – Teaching and Non-Teaching. The behaviour, which may sometimes be tolerated at home, may not always be acceptable in school, due to the large numbers involved. Naturally, we must expect the same standards of behaviour from all children and must therefore ask for Parental support and co-operation in implementing this policy. Our system of discipline has at its centre a concern for the safety and well-being of the pupils. It should not be seen as ‘punishment’ but as being concerned with the supporting of children to behave in a socially acceptable fashion while in the care of teachers and others in the education process. Such aims are best achieved in the framework of a relaxed, pleasant atmosphere where enthusiasm and industry dominate and in which pupils are able to give of their best, both in the classroom and in extracurricular activities and are encouraged and stimulated to fulfil their potential. Our discipline policy is therefore a positive policy of encouraging good attitudes, rewards and praise and setting a good example.

Section 2– The Legislative Context:

- The Addressing Bullying in Schools Act (Northern Ireland) 2016
- The Education and Libraries Order (Northern Ireland) 2003 (A17-19)
- The Education (School Development Plans) Regulations (Northern Ireland) 2010
- The Children (Northern Ireland) Order 1995
- The Human Rights Act 1998

- The Health and Safety at Work Order (Northern Ireland) 1978

The Policy & Guidance Context

- The Addressing Bullying in Schools Act (Northern Ireland) 2016 Statutory Guidance for Schools and Boards of Governors (DE, 2019)
- Pastoral Care in School: Promoting Positive Behaviour (DE, 2001)
- Safeguarding and Child Protection in Schools: A Guide for Schools (DE, 2017)
- 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 Policies and Procedures (SBNI, 2017)

The International Context

- United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child (UNCRC)

The key points to note are:

- The Addressing Bullying in Schools Act (Northern Ireland) 2016:
- Provides a legal definition of bullying.
- Places a duty on the Board of Governors to put in place measures to prevent bullying behaviour, in consultation with pupils and parents.
- Requires schools to record all incidents of bullying behaviour and alleged bullying incidents.
- Sets out under which circumstances this policy should be applied, namely:
 - In school, during the school day
 - While travelling to and from school
 - When under control of school staff, but away from school (e.g. school trip)
 - When receiving education organised by school but happening elsewhere (e.g. in another school as part of Shared Education activities)
- Requires that the policy be updated at least every four years.
- The Education and Libraries Order (NI) 2003, requires the Board of Governors to:
- ‘Safeguard and promote the welfare of registered pupils’ (A.17)
- The United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child (UNCRC) sets out every child’s right to:
 - Be protected from all forms of physical or mental violence, injury or abuse,

maltreatment or exploitation. (A.19)

Be protected from discrimination. (A.2)

Express their views, in a supported and accessible way, on issues that affect them, and to have their opinions taken seriously. (A.12)

DE Guidance

- Pastoral Care in Schools: Promoting Positive Behaviour DE 2001
- Safeguarding and Child Protection in Schools A Guide for Schools DE 2017
- 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 (SBNI) Policies and Procedures 2017
- Addressing Bullying in Schools Act (Northern Ireland) Statutory Guidance for Schools and Boards of Governors 2019

Duty placed on Boards of Governors

The Act creates the following statutory duties:

- All grant-aided schools must have an anti-bullying policy which is updated in intervals of no more than 4 years.
- Boards of Governors must determine and develop an anti-bullying policy, ensure the policy is properly implemented and kept under review so that it continues to be fit for purpose.
- Governors must ensure that all incidents that are reported as bullying are recorded. The school will be able to record whether the alleged incident of bullying is confirmed and responded to through the anti-bullying policy or if the alleged incident is responded to through another policy
- Schools must engage with pupils, parents/carers and the school community when they are developing and reviewing the anti-bullying policy.
- Boards of Governors are required to safeguard and promote the welfare of all registered pupils whether they are on the school premises or elsewhere while in the lawful control or charge of a member of the school. (Article 17:2)
- The Board of Governors must be satisfied that the current Promoting Positive Behaviour deals with the prevention of bullying among pupils in a sufficiently clear

and robust way (Article 19:15)

- The Board of Governors along with the principal will decide on what measures to be used to promote good behaviour in the school and specify measures to prevent bullying among pupils (Article 19:14)
- Consult on measures to encourage good behaviour through a consultation with pupils and their parents (Article 19:14)

Aims of this policy

This policy aims to: -

- Create a school ethos which encourages children to disclose and discuss incidents of bullying behaviour.
- Promote a 'whole school' approach, where signs of bullying are identified and swift and effective action is taken.
- Show commitment to overcoming bullying by practicing zero tolerance.
- Promote a secure and happy environment free from threat, harassment and any type of bullying behaviour.
- Ensure all the school community, pupils and parents have an understanding of what bullying is, and what they should do if bullying arises.
- Inform children and parents of the school's expectations and to foster a productive partnership, which helps maintain a bully-free environment.
- Assure pupils and parents that they will be supported when bullying is reported.
- Assist in the provision of a positive and supportive atmosphere - for those affected by bullying behaviour and for those involved in bullying behaviour.
- Instil a positive self-image in children and celebrate differences.
- To develop procedures for noting and reporting incidents of bullying behaviour.

Section 3 – Ethos & Principles

In Saints and Scholars IPS we bring children and staff from Catholic and Protestant traditions, as well as those of other faiths, or none, together in one school. Integrated Schools differ from other schools in Northern Ireland by ensuring that children from diverse backgrounds are educated together every day in the same classrooms.

Saints and Scholars IPS is essentially Christian in character and welcomes all faiths and none. In Integrated Primary Schools Catholic children are offered Sacramental preparation at P4 and P7. At the same time, Protestant children can will avail of other Religious Education programmes to develop their own faith knowledge. We aim to provide children with a caring and enhanced educational experience; empowering them as individuals so that as they grow and mature, they'll be able to

affect positive change in the shared society we live in.

In Saints and Scholars IPS:

- We are committed to a society where children and young people can live free and safe from bullying.
- We believe in a society where bullying is unacceptable and where every child and young person is safe and feels safe from bullying.
- We believe that every child and young person should be celebrated in their diversity.
- We are committed to a preventative, responsive and restorative anti-bullying ethos across the whole school.
- We value the views and contributions of children and young people, we will actively seek these views and we will respect and take them into account.
- We understand that everyone in our school community has a role to play in taking a stand against bullying and creating a safe and welcoming environment for all.

Section 4 – Consultation and Participation

Consultation with pupils (which will take place in term 3 2021) will include

- Class-based activities including a teacher led consultative workshops with pupils
- School questionnaires distributed to all pupils from P3-P7
- Creation of a reference group of pupils, e.g. the School Council, P3 Council

Consultation with parents will include

- Online Questionnaires distributed to all parents/carers on June 2021
- Engagement with parent council
- Parents given a copy of Anti-Bullying Forum Parent/ Carer Toolkit and Addressing Bullying in Schools Act (NI) 2016 - Information for Parents & Care

Other consultation will include

- Staff survey for all staff, teaching and non-teaching
- Staff training on 1st June 2021. Before the meeting all teaching and non- teaching staff will be given a copy of the Anti-Bullying policy, asked to review it and on training day be involved in redrafting the anti-bullying policy
- Governors training on 25th May. Before the meeting governors will be given a copy of the Anti-Bullying policy, asked to review it and on training evening be involved in redrafting the anti-bullying policy

Section 5 – What is Bullying?

Saints and Scholars IPS & NU uses the legal definition of bullying for Northern Ireland as defined in the Addressing Bullying in Schools Act (Northern Ireland) 2016

Addressing Bullying in Schools Definition of “bullying”:

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.

Bullying is behaviour that is usually repeated, which is carried out intentionally to cause harm or to adversely affect the rights and needs of another or others.

While bullying is usually repeated behaviour, there are instances of one-off incidents that the school will consider as bullying.

When assessing a one-off incident, to make a *decision on whether to classify it as bullying, the school shall consider the following criteria:*

- *Severity and significance of the incident*
- *Evidence of premeditation*
- *Impact of the incident on individuals (physical/emotional)*
- *Impact of the incidents on wider school community*
- *Previous relationships between those involved*
- *Any previous incidents involving the individuals*

Any incidents which are not considered bullying behaviour will be addressed under the Positive Behaviour Policy.

The following unacceptable behaviours, when repeated, targeted and intentionally hurtful, may be considered a bullying behaviour:

- Verbal or written acts
- Saying mean and hurtful things to, or about, others
- Making fun of others
- Calling another pupil mean and hurtful names
- Telling lies or spread false rumours about others
- Trying to make other pupils dislike another pupil/s
- Physical acts
- Hitting

- Kicking
- Pushing
- Shoving
- Material harm, such as taking/stealing money or possessions or causing damage to possessions
- Omission (Exclusion)
- Leaving someone out of a game
- Refusing to include someone in group work
- Electronic Acts
- Using online platforms or other electronic communication to carry out many of the written acts noted above
- Impersonating someone online to cause hurt
- Sharing images (e.g. photographs or videos) online to embarrass someone

This list is not exhaustive and that other behaviours which fit with the definition may be considered bullying behaviour.

Motivations behind bullying, including those named in the Act. These include, but are not limited to:

- Age
- Appearance
- Breakdown in peer relationships
- Community background
- Political affiliation
- Gender identity
- Sexual orientation
- Pregnancy
- Marital status
- Race
- Religion
- Disability / SEN
- Ability
- Looked After Child status
- Young Carer status

Bullying is an emotive issue, therefore it is essential that we ensure we use supportive, understanding language when discussing these matters. For that reason, we will not refer to a child as 'a bully', nor will we refer to a child as 'a victim'. Instead, we will refer to the child by describing the situation surrounding that child, for example:

- A child displaying bullying behaviours
- A child experiencing bullying behaviours

We encourage all members of the school community to use this language when discussing bullying incidents.

In determining 'harm' we define:

- Emotional or psychological harm as intentionally causing distress or anxiety by scaring, humiliating or affecting adversely a pupil's self-esteem.
- Physical harm as intentionally hurting a pupil by causing injuries such as bruises, broken bones, burns or cuts.

Section 6 – Preventative Measures

Under the legislation, the focus for all anti-bullying work should be on prevention. In Saints and Scholars IPS we use a range of strategies with the aim of preventing bullying and creating a safe learning environment. Examples of these include:

- Raising awareness and understanding of the positive behaviour expectations, as set out in the Positive Behaviour Policy
- Promotion of anti-bullying messages through the curriculum e.g. inclusion of age-appropriate material specific to individual subject areas related to bullying, positive behaviour and inclusion
- Addressing issues such as the various forms of bullying, including the how and why it can happen, through PDMU/ Integration / Shared Education/ Erasmus Project (e.g. sectarian, racist, homophobic, transphobic, disablist, etc.)
- Involvement in meaningful and supportive shared education projects, supporting pupils to explore, understand and respond to difference and diversity.
- Through the preventative curriculum actively promote positive emotional health and wellbeing (e.g. PATHs, Uberheroes)
- Participation in the NIABF annual Anti-Bullying Week activities
- Engagement in key national and regional campaigns, e.g. Safer Internet Day, Good Relations Week, etc.
- Development of peer-led systems (e.g. School Council) to support the delivery and promotion of key anti-bullying messaging within the school
- Development of effective strategies for playground management, e.g. training for supervisors, zoning of playgrounds, inclusion of specific resources (buddy benches) and provision of a variety of play options to meet the needs of all pupils. Consultation with the staff indicates that class / year group zoning in the playground will continue
- Focused assemblies to raise awareness and promote understanding of key issues related to bullying.
- Development of effective strategies for the management of unstructured times (e.g. break time, lunch). Class consultation and establish shared rules which all staff will understand. Rules for lining up and separate rules for the dining hall. These to be displayed in the dining hall and outside.
- Provision and promotion of extra- and co-curricular activities, aimed at supporting the development of effective peer support relationships and networks. For example, sporting activity, creative arts, leisure and games, etc.

While many of the measures outlined above will support the development of an anti-bullying culture, there are a number of ways Saints and Scholars IPS can further build upon this related specifically on the journey to and from school. This includes:

- Development of a culture where pupils take pride in their school and are viewed as ambassadors for their school within the community. This includes regular reminders of the positive behaviour expectations of pupils whilst travelling to and from school.
- The use of a bus supervisor to challenge inappropriate and unacceptable behaviour during the bus journey to and from school.
- Promotion of key anti-bullying messages and awareness of behaviour expectations of pupils amongst the local community. These messages will be placed on the school website and Facebook pages and will include information on how to raise any concerns with the school.
- Staff will follow a duty rota each day to support the transition from school day to journey home (e.g. staff duty at school doors / bus / bus escort on the bus)

The new legislation also gives schools the authority to take steps to prevent bullying through the use of electronic communication amongst pupils at any time during term, where that behaviour is likely to have a detrimental effect on the pupil's education at school.

In Saints and Scholars IPS we will raise awareness of the nature and impact of online bullying and support all pupils to make use of the internet in a safe, responsible and respectful way. This will include:

- Addressing key themes of online behaviour and risk through PDMU/ICT including understanding how to respond to harm and the consequences of inappropriate use.
- Participation in Anti-Bullying Week activities.
- Engagement with key statutory and voluntary sector agencies (e.g. C2k, PSNI, Public Health Agency, Safeguarding Board for NI e-Safety Forum) to support the promotion of key messages.
- Participation in annual Safer Internet Day and promotion of key messages throughout the year.
- Development and implementation of robust and appropriate policies in related areas (e.g. Acceptable Use of the Internet Policy, Filtering and Blocking Policy, Mobile Phone Policy, Connected Devices Policy, etc.)

This Anti-Bullying Policy is one of a number of policies in the wider pastoral care and safeguarding suite of policies. As such, all these policies align and provide a consistent message. The measures set out here, to prevent bullying behaviour through the use of electronic communication, will be included in the school's e-Safety Policy and/or Acceptable Use of the Internet Policy. Given the nature of technology, as it is constantly changing and developing, it is important that as a school we monitor each policy and message and make changes when necessary. In Saints and Scholars we will

- Make children aware of the consequences of online bullying from the start of the year. Share with the children what exactly the school/or response outside of school will be.
- Inform all parties and the school can act an intermediary where applicable.
- Provide materials to educate parents about how their children communicate online, so that they might better police this at home.
- Make parent /carers aware that school does not have to deal with these incidents but if appropriate and deemed necessary we will respond and try to resolve
- Support the child so that even though the incident has occurred outside school that they can still report the incident to a trusted adult in school.
- The response of the school may depend on the severity of the incident.

Section 7 – Responsibility

In Saints and Scholars IPS everyone has responsibility for creating a safe and supportive learning environment for all members of the school communities.

Everyone in our school community, including pupils, their parents/carers and the staff of the school are expected to respect the rights of others to be safe.

Everyone has the responsibility to work together to:

- foster positive self-esteem
- behave towards others in a mutually respectful way
- model high standards of personal pro-social behaviour
- be alert to signs of distress and other possible indications of bullying behaviour
- inform the school of any concerns relating to bullying behaviour
- refrain from becoming involved in any kind of bullying behaviour, even at the risk of incurring temporary unpopularity.
- refrain from retaliating to any form of bullying behaviour
- intervene to support any person who is being bullied, unless it is unsafe to do so.
- report any concerns or instances of bullying behaviour witnessed or suspected, to a member of staff.
- emphasise the importance of seeking help from a trusted adult about bullying behaviour when it happens or is observed
- explain the implications of allowing the bullying behaviour to continue unchecked, for themselves and/or others.
- listen sensitively to anyone who has been bullied, take what is said seriously, and provide reassurance that appropriate action will be taken
- know how to seek support – internal and external
- resolve difficulties in restorative ways to prevent recurring bullying behaviour and meet the needs of all parties

Section 8 – Reporting a Bullying Concern

Pupils Reporting a Concern

Pupils in Saints and Scholars IPS are encouraged to raise concerns with any member of staff, including teaching and non-teaching staff. should be outlined in Section 11 of the policy.

Pupils can report bullying concerns in a variety of ways including:

- Verbally- talking to a member of staff
- By writing a note to a member of staff (e.g. in a homework diary)
- By posting a comment in a 'worry box'

ANY pupil can raise a concern about bullying behaviour, not just the pupil who is experiencing this behaviour. Through the preventative work undertaken in school the focus is on 'getting help' rather than 'telling'. As such, all pupils should be encouraged to 'get help' if they have a concern about bullying that they experience or is experienced by another.

Parents/Carers Reporting a Concern

Parents and carers are encouraged to raise concerns about alleged bullying behaviour with the school at the earliest opportunity. Parents/carers need to encourage their children to react appropriately to bullying behaviour and to not do anything to retaliate or to 'hit back'.

The process for reporting alleged bullying behaviour is:

- In the first instance, all bullying concerns should be reported to the Class Teacher
- Where the parent is not satisfied that appropriate action has been taken to prevent further incidents, or where further incidents have taken place, the concern should be reported to Vice-Principal, as applicable.
- Where the parent is not satisfied that appropriate action has been taken by the Vice-Principal to prevent further incidents, or where further incidents have taken place, the concern should be reported to the Principal.

Where the parent/carer remains unsatisfied that the concern has not been appropriately responded to, the school's complaints procedure should be followed. This usually involves making a formal, written complaint, to the Chair of the Board of Governors. While the majority of reports of bullying concerns will come from pupils and their parents/carers, the school is open to receiving such reports from anyone.

All reports of bullying concerns received from pupils and/or parents/carers will be responded to in line with this policy and feedback will be made to the person who made the report. However, it must be noted that no information about action taken in relation to a pupil can be disclosed to anyone other than the pupil and his/her parents/carers.

Section 9 – Responding to a Bullying Concern

The processes outlined below provide a framework for how the school will respond to any bullying concerns identified.

Using the NIABF Effective Responses to Bullying Behaviour resource, the member of staff responsible shall...

- Clarify facts and perceptions
- Check records (SIMS/BMM)
- Assess the incident against the criteria for bullying behaviour
- Identify any themes or motivating factors
- Identify the type of bullying behaviour being displayed
- Identify intervention level
- Select and implement appropriate interventions for all pupils involved, including appropriate interventions, consequences and sanctions not listed in the Effective Responses to Bullying Behaviour resource
- Track, monitor and record effectiveness of interventions
- Review outcome of interventions
- Select and implement further intentions as necessary

When responding to a bullying concern, school staff shall implement interventions aimed at responding to the behaviour, resolving the concern and restoring the wellbeing of those involved. Where appropriate, school staff may implement sanctions for those displaying bullying behaviour.

Information regarding any action taken regarding a pupil cannot be disclosed to anyone other than that pupil and his/her parents/carers.

Section 10 – Recording

In Saints and Scholars IPS we recognise the legal requirement, as set out in the Addressing Bullying in Schools Act (NI) 2016, to maintain a record of all incidents of bullying and alleged bullying behaviour.

The school will centrally record all relevant information related to reports of bullying concerns, including:

- how the bullying behaviour was displayed (the method)
- the motivation for the behaviour
- how each incident was addressed by the school
- the outcome of the interventions employed.

Records will be kept on the online SIMS Behaviour Management Module, which is part of the C2k system in schools. Access to these records will be restricted and only provided to those members of school staff with a legitimate need to have access.

All records will be maintained in line with relevant data protection legislation and guidance and will be disposed of in line with the school's Retention and Disposal of Documents Policy. Collated information regarding incidents of bullying and alleged bullying behaviour will be used to inform the future development of anti-bullying policy and practice within the school.

Section 11 – Professional Development of Staff

In Saints and Scholars IPS we recognise the need for appropriate and adequate training for staff, including teaching and non-teaching school staff. This may include:

- stating a commitment to ensuring that staff are provided with appropriate opportunities for professional development as part of the school's ongoing CPD/PRSD provisions
- noting the impact of the training given on both the policy and its procedures - e.g. any amendments made, inclusions added etc.
- ensuring that opportunities for safeguarding training are afforded to Governors and all staff – teaching and non-teaching
- stating that CPD records will be kept and updated regularly

Section 12 – Monitoring and Review of Policy

To appropriately monitor the effectiveness of the Anti-Bullying Policy, the Board of Governors shall:

- maintain a standing item on the agenda of each meeting of the Board where a report on recorded incidents of bullying will be noted
- identify trends and priorities for action
- assess the effectiveness of strategies aimed at preventing bullying behaviour
- assess the effectiveness of strategies aimed at responding to bullying behaviour

This Anti-Bullying Policy shall be reviewed as required, in consultation with pupils and their parents/carers, on or before June 2025

Section 12 – Links to Other Policies

In the development and implementation of this Anti-Bullying Policy, the Board of Governors has been mindful of related policies, including:

- Positive Behaviour Policy
- Pastoral Care Policy
- Safeguarding and Child Protection Policy
- Special Educational Needs Policy
- Health and Safety Policy
- Relationships and Sexuality Education
- E-Safety Policy & Acceptable Use of Internet Policy
- Social media policy
- Mobile Phone Policy
- Educational Visits
- Staff Code of Conduct