



*Have faith...believe you can!*

## **St John the Baptist School**

### **Anti-bullying Policy**

**(Including a statement on child-on-child abuse)**

Status & Review Cycle: Annual Review

Next Review Date: April 2025

## Intent

SJB aims to foster and promote an ethos where everyone is valued and respected, and where kindness and tolerance are central to living out the school's Christian values. SJB has five key values, which underpin all our work:

- Respect
- Aspire
- Integrity
- Love
- Service

It is through promoting these values, that we enable all children to learn and thrive in a supportive and nurturing environment, which is safe and calm and where bullying of any kind is not accepted. This policy outlines the school's approach to bullying, and the expectations of our community in tackling bullying and working towards elimination of bullying at our school. The policy should be read in conjunction with the Child Protection and Safeguarding Policy and the Behaviour Policy.

## Aims

- To work towards eliminating bullying at SJB and ensuring that bullying of any kind is not tolerated.
- To work in line with the school behaviour policy to sanction any form of bullying and have a clear approach for reporting and dealing with bullying incidents.
- To promote the school values in all we do, especially in our approach to bullying so that:
  - Students **respect** each other and their differences.
  - As a community we **aspire** to eliminate bullying and do not accept it
  - All members of the community act with **integrity** and actively promote anti-bullying.
  - **Love** prevails our actions and we show love and kindness to all.
  - Students should demonstrate **service** to one other by always being kind and reporting any instances of bullying either of them or a peer.
- To enable students, staff, and parents to understand what constitutes bullying and their responsibilities.
- To provide education to students to enable them to fully understand how to recognise the signs of bullying and know how to report bullying, including who to talk to
- To ensure that all stake holders trust that bullying will be taken seriously and dealt with effectively by the school.
- To promote an anti-bullying agenda across the school, led by the anti-bullying lead, to include:
  - An anti-bullying committee
  - Posters and literature across the school to promote anti-bullying.
  - Assemblies to promote anti-bullying.
  - Pastoral courses within tutor time and education within PSHE specifically about anti-bullying
  - Opportunities to utilise staff and student voice to inform the school's approach to anti-bullying.

## What is Bullying?

Bullying is the repetitive, intentional hurting of one person or group by another person or group, where the relationship involves an imbalance of power. Bullying is often defined as *several times on purpose*, and can

take the form of repetitive physical acts, spoken words, written words, pictures, or silent gestures. It can be physical or emotional and can be motivated by actual differences between children or perceived differences. Bullying is often categorised as:

- **Psychological** (being excluded from groups and rumours etc.)
- **Cyber** (abusive text messages, internet messages etc.)
- **Verbal** (threats, name calling, racism, homophobia etc.)
- **Physical** (punching, kicking, scratching, pushing, throwing objects at someone etc.)

Bullying behaviours can be inside or outside school premises and can include:

- Emotional - being unfriendly, excluding, tormenting, undermining confidence (e.g., hiding books, threatening gestures), spreading malicious rumours, inflicting the 'silent' treatment).
- Physical - pushing, kicking, hitting, punching or any use of violence.
- Racist - racial taunts, graffiti, gestures.
- Sexual - sexual harassment in any form is bullying, e.g., unwanted physical contact, sexually abusive comments, de-clothing.
- Homophobic/Gender based - because of, or focussing on, the issue of sexual orientation and/or gender.
- Verbal - name-calling, sarcasm, spreading rumours, teasing.
- Cyber - all areas of internet, such as email & internet and social media.
- Mobile misuse by text messaging, picture messaging, video clip & calls.
- Misuse of associated technology, i.e., camera & video facilities, use of AI to bully.
- Prejudice - on grounds of different interests or economic status, i.e., students can be bully for being interested in things such as work, music, acting, drama, sport.
- Ganging-up - Where a group or 'in-crowd' decides that a certain person's 'face does not fit' because of certain prejudices, as exemplified above.
- Misuse of – to exploit seniority, such as pushing in front of younger students in the dinner queue.
- Bullying may involve complicity that falls short of direct participation by, for instance manipulating a third party to tease or torment someone.

Some forms of bullying can break the law and may be reported to the police by school, including:

- Violence or assault
- Theft
- Repeated harassment or intimidation, include using social media.
- Sexual harassment or sexual bullying online
- Hate crimes – any incident which the is based on someone's prejudice towards a protected characteristic, such as race, religion, sexual orientation, disability, or gender (As per the Equality Act 2010).

## **Bullying and AI**

Generative artificial intelligence (AI)

Artificial intelligence (AI) tools are now widespread and easy to access. Staff, pupils, and parents/carers may be familiar with generative chatbots such as ChatGPT and Google Bard.

SJB recognises that AI has many uses to help pupils learn but may also have the potential to be used to bully others. For example, in the form of 'deepfakes', where AI is used to create images, audio or video hoaxes that look real.

SJB will treat any use of AI to bully pupils in line with our anti-bullying/behaviour policy.

### **What to look out for**

A child may indicate, by signs or behaviour, that he or she is being bullied. Adults 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 on the school/public bus.
- begs to be driven to school.
- changes their usual routine.
- is unwilling to go to school (school refusal)
- begins to truant.
- becomes withdrawn, anxious, or lacking in confidence.
- starts stammering.
- attempts, or threatens, suicide or runs away.
- cries themselves to sleep at night or has nightmares.
- feels ill regularly in the morning.
- begins to do poorly in schoolwork.
- comes home with clothes torn or books damaged.
- has possessions which are damaged or "go missing".
- asks for money or starts stealing money.
- has dinner or other monies continually "lost".
- has unexplained cuts or bruises.
- comes home regularly very hungry.
- becomes aggressive, disruptive, or unreasonable without cause.
- is bullying other children or siblings.
- stops eating.
- is frightened to say what is wrong.
- 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.

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

Bullying should never be excused as banter or playing a game.

### **Prevention**

“A school’s response to bullying should not start at the point at which a child has been bullied. The best schools develop a more sophisticated approach in which school staff proactively gather intelligence about issues between pupils which might provoke conflict and develop strategies to prevent bullying occurring in the first place.”

### **(Department for Education - Preventing and tackling bullying, July 2017)**

We aim to take a proactive approach when dealing with any instances of bullying but will always react immediately to any new reported incidents. We believe that bullying can be prevented through a range of proactive measures and seek every opportunity to prevent bullying behaviours from occurring.

A number of strategies are employed at SJB:

- Good supervision is one of the most efficient and economical preventative strategies – staff are on duty before school and at break and lunch time.
- All staff are encouraged to be vigilant for incidents of bullying.
- The school employs an Anti-bullying Lead to promote this agenda across the school.
- Anti-bullying messages are displayed around the school as posters which promote diversity and anti-bullying awareness.
- The Anti-bullying Committee meet regularly to develop new ways to promote this agenda across the school. Some members have undergone Diana Award training and engage with the Young ABA Programme
- The school observes Anti-bullying week to further promote awareness.
- There is an Anti-bullying pastoral course delivered across Y7-11 in tutor times.
- PSHE lessons tackle bullying and RSE, educating children on healthy relationships and how to spot the signs of bullying.
- Anti-bullying assemblies are held to remind students of how to report and seek support.
- The House system is employed promote kindness and respect and raise awareness of Anti-bullying.
- Students are made aware of the anti-bullying policy and are actively encouraged to come forward if they are concerned or worried about something.
- An app service is available to students to report bullying (Here2Help app). This is monitored by a member of the DSL team.
- Lightspeed network monitoring software is used to detect inappropriate use of the ICT facilities, including cyberbullying.
- Mobile phones are not permitted around school - this works towards avoiding cyber bullying in school.
- Seating plans are informed by pastoral staff if there is a need to separate certain individuals to mitigate bullying.
- A number of staff are available to the students for counselling advice and ELSA.
- The schoolwork closely with the police and children’s services whenever necessary to support students.

SJB recognises that specific groups of students are particularly vulnerable to bullying. These include children and young people with Special Educational Needs and Disabilities (SEND), young carers, Black and Minority Ethnic (BAME), those who are LGBTQ+. As such, prevention of bullying considers the specific patterns of discrimination these groups face.

In order to be proactive and prevent bullying, we expect that:

**Students will:**

- Not tolerate bullying.
- Not stand by and watch someone else being bullied.
- Not retaliate, as this will only make things worse.
- Immediately inform a teacher or other adult of any bullying known to them.
- Not condone an 'anti-snitch' culture and actively report incidents.
- Show love and give support to victims of bullying whenever they can.

**Staff will:**

- Be positive role models in their words and action at all times.
- Report any incidents of bullying to the appropriate members of staff.
- Make detailed records of all incidents and log these on CPOMS.
- Have a zero-tolerance approach to bullying.
- Ensure that all pupils are aware of the range of sanctions which may be applied against those engaging in bullying.
- Seek help for victims and remove sources of distress without placing the victim at further risk.

**Parents will**

- Promote zero tolerance to bullying with their children.
- Encourage their children to be open and honest with staff and report any concerns that they might have.
- Tackle any notion of an 'anti-snitch' attitude and always encourage reporting incidents.
- Report any incidents of bullying or information which could help the school deal with incidents of bullying, always explaining to the child the importance of bringing school into the picture.
- Work collaboratively with the school when dealing with any incidents of bullying.

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## **Procedures**

### **Reporting**

We encourage all members of the community to report any instances of bullying which they become aware of, whether they are the victim or a witness. Promoting a culture of reporting is central to ensuring that staff are able to deal effectively with bullying incidents and put measures in place to support victims and work with perpetrators.

**Students** can report bullying by:

- Speaking to or emailing
  - any member of staff, who will then report via CPOMS.
  - Their form tutor, who will then pass onto the Head of Year
  - Head of Year who will put the appropriate intervention in place.
  - Their parents who can then report to the school.
  - Any member of the Designated Safeguarding Leads team (see posters around school)
- Use the Here2Help app on their iPads to report bullying.
- Use the reporting function on the school website.
- For Sixth Form students, they can either speak to their tutor, Head of Year, or Head of Sixth Form, or scan the QR code on posters around the Sixth Form building to report electronically.

**Parents** can report bullying by:

- Emailing or phoning:
  - Their child's tutor.
  - Their child's Head of Year
  - Any member of the School Leadership Team
  - A member of the Designated Safeguarding Leads team
- Reporting bullying via the school website
- For parents of Sixth Form students, they can contact the student's tutor, Head of Year, or the Head of Sixth Form

**Staff** are always expected to remain vigilant and report any incident of bullying or suspicion that this might be taking place. Equally, if a child speaks to them then this must be reported. All incidents should be recorded on CPOMS electronically, but staff can also speak to any Head of Year, member of the School Leadership Team, or member of the Designated Safeguarding Leads Team.

### **Investigation**

All reported incidents of bullying will be taken seriously and, regardless of the means of reporting, incidents will be fully investigated by the appropriate member(s) of staff, which may include an Assistant Head of Year, Head of Year, member of the School Leadership Team, or member of the Designated Safeguarding Leads team. Throughout any investigation, all students will continue to receive a full education. Depending on the nature of the incident, it may require the involvement of external agencies.

All investigations will take into account the needs of the victim and will be conducted in a sensitive and timely manner. The process of investigation will usually include:

- Talking to the victims and taking a statement from them
- Taking witness statements for anyone who can provide first-hand evidence.
- Talking to the accused and taking on board their version of events
- Involving parents/carers of any information/action where appropriate
- Documenting evidence and actions using CPOMS.
- Informing the students involved of any sanctions or further consequences/actions which will be put

in place following the investigation.

## **Outcomes**

- Bullying is not tolerated at SJB; therefore, the actions of bullies will be dealt with in line with our school Behaviour Policy. Sanctions will be used where necessary, these may include:
  - Detentions or loss of free time
  - Suspensions or even Permanent Exclusions in extreme cases
- Victims of bullying will be offered ongoing support to meet their needs which may include:
  - Emotional Literacy Support
  - Time with the school counsellor
  - A well-being mentors.
  - Support from the pastoral team, including Assistant Heads of Year or Heads of Year
  - For more extreme cases a referral to Mindworks or to external agencies for further support.
- Actions where possible will be put in place to ensure that contact is minimised between the two parties, and the victim is supported in feeling happy and safe in school.
- Parents will be notified of actions and kept updated of decisions regarding bullying incidents.
- Where appropriate, the school will seek to support reparations between the victim and bully and use restorative practices to achieve this.
- The needs of the victim and perpetrator will be taken into account, including any Special Educational Need or factor which may require reasonable adjustments.
- Pastoral staff will monitor the situation, with any further incidents being treated as more severe.
- Where necessary, the school will seek support from external agencies such as children's services and police.

## **Further Help**

### Helplines

**ChildLine:** ChildLine is the UK's free, confidential helpline for children and young people. They offer advice and support, by phone and online, 24 hours a day. Whenever and wherever you need them, they'll be there. Call 0800 1111. They have a designated page for bullying issues that includes a new video about building up your confidence after bullying.

**Direct Gov:** Information for young people on cyberbullying, bullying on social networks, Internet, and email bullying, bullying on mobile phones, bullying at school, what to do about bullying, and information and advice for people who are bullying others and want to stop.

**EACH:** EACH has a freephone Helpline for children experiencing homophobic, biphobic or transphobic bullying or harassment: 0808 1000 143. It's open Monday to Friday 10am-5pm.

**Victim Support:** They offer support to young people affected by crime. Their Children and Young People's (CYP) Service also deals with cases of bullying; offering advice and working with professionals to ensure young people get the support they need. You can call their Support line for free on 08 08 16 89 111.

### Websites



The websites below have lots of information and advice for anyone who has experienced bullying.

The Child Exploitation and Online Protection Centre (CEOP) maintains a website for children and young people, and parents and carers about staying safe online: Think U Know

Childline: information about bullying

Kidscape: information for young people

Reporting cyberbullying

If someone makes you feel uncomfortable or upset online, talk to an adult you can trust. If you would prefer to talk to someone in confidence you can contact Childline (0800 1111)

If someone has acted inappropriately online towards you, or someone you know, you can report directly to the Child Exploitation and Online Protection Centre (CEOP). It could be sexual or threatening chat, or being asked to do something that makes you feel uncomfortable or someone asking to meet up.

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## **Statement: Child-on-child abuse**

All children have a right to attend school and learn in a safe environment.

All members of staff recognise that children are capable of abusing other children. We believe that sexualised behaviour between peers that has become harmful or abusive is unacceptable and must be addressed.

Allegations of child-on-child abuse will be dealt with under our child protection and safeguarding policy and in line with KCSiE (2023), including seeking advice and support from external agencies, as appropriate. We are clear that sexual violence and sexual harassment is not acceptable, will never be tolerated, passed off as 'banter' or 'just having a laugh' and is not an inevitable part of growing up.

We recognise that child-on-child abuse can take many forms, including but not limited to:

- bullying, including cyberbullying.
- physical abuse which can include hitting, kicking, shaking, biting, hair pulling, or otherwise causing physical harm.
- sexual violence and sexual harassment
- 'Up skirting' which typically involves taking a picture under a person's clothing without them knowing, with the intention of viewing their genitals or buttocks to obtain sexual gratification, or cause the victim humiliation, distress, or alarm.
- Nude or semi-nude image sharing (also known as 'sexting' or 'youth produced/involved sexual imagery)
- Initiation/hazing type violence and rituals.

These will not be tolerated. We would strongly encourage all students to report incidents so that they can be dealt with promptly.

To minimise the risk of child-on-child abuse we will:

- implement a robust behaviour and anti-bullying policy.
- provide an age appropriate RSE and PHSE curriculum which includes what healthy and respectful relationships, respectful behaviour looks like, consent, gender roles, stereotyping and equality, that sexual violence and sexual harassment are always wrong.
- provide a range of reporting processes including face-to-face and online reporting.

Whilst we encourage children to report concerns and complaints directly to us, we recognise this may not always be possible. Children, young people, and adults who have experienced abuse at school can contact the NSPCC 'Report Abuse in Education' helpline on [0800 136 663](tel:0800136663) or via the Here2Help app on their iPads/ [help@nspcc.org.uk](mailto:help@nspcc.org.uk).