

ANTI-BULLYING POLICY

The school's anti-bullying policy is an integral part of its Behaviour for Learning policy which aims to promote:

- Self esteem
- High standards of self-discipline and behaviour
- High expectations regarding individual conduct
- Recognition of achievement
- Personal and collective responsibility

Aims and objectives

The aims and objectives of the policy are:

- To ensure the safety and happiness of all members of the school - bullying makes pupils unhappy and may lead to loss of confidence and self-esteem.
- To enable all pupils to achieve their potential - bullied pupils are unlikely to concentrate fully on their school work, they may avoid attending school.
- To provide models for behaviour. To challenge bullying behaviour as an acceptable way of resolving situations.
- To develop the school's reputation as a caring environment, to reassure pupils, parents and others that the school will act positively and effectively in regard to bullying.

Why tackle bullying

The prevention and tackling of bullying is given a high priority at John O'Gaunt School.

- Bullying makes pupils unhappy.
- Pupils who are being bullied are unlikely to concentrate fully on their school work.
- Some pupils avoid being bullied by not going to school.
- Pupils who observe unchallenged bullying behaviour are likely to copy this anti-social behaviour.
- Schools which take action against bullying build a reputation as an effective, caring school.
- It is acknowledged that some groups of students are more susceptible to bullying, eg SEN students, and therefore extra vigilance is in place.

Anti-bullying code

- All students were involved in creating the John O'Gaunt Bullying Statement (Nov 2014).*
- Every person at John O'Gaunt has the right to enjoy their learning and leisure time, free from intimidation.
- Our school community will not tolerate any unkind actions or remarks, even if they were not intended to hurt.
- Any unkind action or comment will be called bullying.
- Pupils should support each other by reporting all instances of bullying.
- Bullying will be dealt with seriously.
- We are a 'telling' school - bullying is too important not to report.

What is bullying

"BULLYING IS THE WILFUL, CONSCIOUS DESIRE TO HURT ANOTHER AND PUT HIM/HER UNDER STRESS". It includes:

- Extortion
- Power seeking, power abuse
- Verbal/mental, name calling
- Threat

- Isolation of victim
- Anyone who coerces you to do anything against your will - by gesture, word or deed
- Picking on a sensitive issue (family matter) divorce, death taunts
- Depriving others of their belongings (school bag, money etc)
- By proxy
- Ganging up
- Excluding (cliquish behaviour), ignoring
- Put-downs, sarcasm, laughing at, giggling at
- Overt and covert behaviour
- Scape-goating
- Racism
- Unobtrusive physical bullying
- Achilles heel (no mother, spotty-face etc)
- Suppression of opinions in class
- Harassment - name calling, merciless teasing, beyond social boundaries
- Strong arm tactics, enslavement, fagging
- Exploiting fear

* John O'Gaunt Bullying Charter

'Bullying is the repetitive and purposeful abuse of somebody. This can be verbal, physical, and emotional, in relationships or cyber. It is the constant and deliberate mistreatment of others that causes hurt and offense'.

ACTIONS: If you are being bullied, our students advise that you:

1. Remain calm - getting upset or worked up will only make it feel worse;
2. Tell someone - a friend, teacher or parent;
3. Be brave - act confidently and bravely around the bully. It is they who have the problem;
4. Don't give in - make sure you stop the bullying. If you are not happy that it has, repeat steps 2 and 3 again.

SANCTIONS: Sanctions will be put in place and will depend upon the level of bullying and each case. Sanctions include:

1. Restorative meetings with students/parents;
2. Detentions;
3. Meetings with staff and parents;
4. Police involvement;
5. Exclusions.

Guidelines for reporting and dealing with reported incidents of bullying (to staff)

All incidents of bullying reported to teaching and ancillary staff need to be dealt with. Don't just pass it over - it gives the wrong signals to the children.

- Watch for early signs of distress in pupils such as work deterioration, spurious illness. This behaviour may be symptomatic of other problems - possibly early signs of being the victim of bullying.
- Listen carefully to all reported incidents of bullying.
- Offer the victim support and help by putting the school's procedures into operation.
- Make the unacceptable nature of the behaviour and the consequences of any repetition clear to the bully.
- Use the pupils as a resource for countering bullying and sexual and racial harassment, within class and tutorial groups. Peer groups may help to resolve problems.

Dealing with reported incidents

- Take the victim seriously.
- Interview the bully and others involved (in serious cases, get the victim and bully to record the events in writing)
- Record reported incidents in writing using the student account sheets.
- Report all incidents of bullying by following the school's referral procedures.
- Inform the parents of both the victim and the bully of all but minor incidents and the action taken.
- Records of incidents are to be placed in pupil files.
- Pastoral team invite parents in to discuss any repeated or serious incidents of bullying.
- Involve outside agencies of concerns regarding bullies and victims.
- Advise parents of the school's system of sanctions in regard to bullying.

Guidelines for students

Report any bullying you receive, or see, to a member of staff. DO NOT suffer in silence.

Sanctions for dealing with bullies

In line with the school's Behaviour for Learning policy there is a series of sanctions that will be taken if bullying continues.

- Minor incidents will be resolved through discussion with bully/victim, peer mentor support.
- More serious or repeated incidents will be recorded on file and parents notified and appropriate sanctions taken. These may include restorative justice meetings.
- Repeated bullying will lead to further sanctions being taken with parents invited in.
- Pupil may be internally excluded.
- Pupil may face external exclusions or in, the last resort, permanent exclusion.

Supporting victims

How we react to victims of bullying gives clear signals both to the victim and to the bully. Victims can be supported in a number of ways.

- a) Teachers and support staff - in the playground, classroom and other areas of the school, can play an important role:
 - be aware of pupils being pressurised or teased by peers;
 - challenge any incidents they see or are reported to them;
 - take all reported incidents seriously;
 - give victims an opportunity to respond assertively to situations.
- b) Develop strategies for dealing with bullying through PSHCEE and tutorial Programme.
- c) Develop assertiveness techniques amongst victims (in small group or individual situations). These techniques encourage the use of clear, direct and honest messages to prevent or avoid bullying situations developing.
- d) Develop peer group programmes using peer mentors (senior students) in the school.
- e) Counselling through school nurse, Youth & Community.

Strategies for dealing with bullying

The following are a variety of strategies that may be employed in addressing incidents of bullying:

Reasoning with bullies

Trying to get bullies to appreciate how the victim feels. This will involve interviews with the bully. Getting the bully to talk to the victim, explain why he did what he did and how he feels about this. Getting the victim to talk to the bully etc.

Frequent policing of the situation (especially 'hot spots')

This can include improved supervision at break times and in the classrooms and re-questioning children who have been concerned in bullying incidents. Some schools regularly reissue the anonymous questionnaire to reinforce school policy.

Buddying (Peer Mentoring)

This is a technique in which older children are trained to counsel and befriend pupils who are being bullied or are in need of a friend. The use of buddying/helpliner/bully boxes can enable children to ask for help in confidence. Children have access to these boxes. The presence of an older, admired pupil alongside a bullied child at breaktime conveys a clear message to the bullies.

Restorative Justice

Students meet to speak about the harm that is done and how they feel. There is a script that is followed and at the end of the meeting, the students agree an outcome for everyone to maintain.

The use of sanctions

This strategy focuses on the bully, using sanctions, with exclusion regarded as the final action in demonstrating to pupils and parents that a school will not tolerate bullying. [The use of other strategies does not preclude the use of sanctions, including exclusion as a last resort].

Use of the curriculum

The curriculum can be used to:

- raise awareness about bullying behaviour and about the school's anti-bullying policy;
- challenge attitudes about bullying behaviour;
- increase understanding and support for bullied pupils;
- develop assertiveness techniques.

Assemblies

Used as 'key note' assemblies, including Anti-bullying week, to clarify what bullying is and emphasise why we should not accept this behaviour.

Tutor Group Time

Can investigate the issue of bullying in a number of ways:

- develop an anti-bullying code;
- what pupils should do if - they are being bullied / they see someone else being bullied;
- what should happen to bullies;
- how can victims be supported;
- use of video and published materials.

P.S.H.E. Programme

A bank of materials and resources have been produced and can be used to work with victims, bullies and class groups.