



Our Lady Immaculate School

ANTI-BULLYING POLICY

Rationale

Everyone at Our Lady Immaculate School has the right to feel welcome, secure and happy. Only if this is the case will all members of the school community be able to achieve to their maximum potential. Bullying of any sort prevents this being able to happen and prevents equality of opportunity. It is everyone's responsibility to prevent this happening and this policy contains guidelines to support this ethos.

Where bullying exists the victims must feel confident to activate the anti-bullying systems within the school to end the bullying. It is our aim to challenge attitudes about bullying behaviour, increase understanding for bullied pupils and help build an anti-bullying ethos in the school.

This document outlines how we make this possible at Our Lady Immaculate School.

Definitions of Bullying

Bullying is deliberately hurtful behaviour that is repeated over a period of time, making it difficult for the person concerned to defend themselves. This can take the form of name-calling, violence, threatened violence, isolation, ridicule or indirect action such as spreading unpleasant stories about someone.

The school works hard to ensure that all pupils know the difference between bullying and simply "falling out".

Actions to Tackle Bullying

Prevention is better than cure so at Our Lady Immaculate we will be vigilant for signs of bullying and always take reports of incidents seriously. We will use the curriculum whenever possible to reinforce the ethos of the school and help pupils to develop strategies to combat bullying-type behaviour.

Pupils are told that they must report any incidence of bullying to an adult within school, and that when another pupil tells them that they are being bullied or if they see bullying taking place it is their responsibility to report their knowledge to a member of staff.

All reported incidents of bullying will be investigated and taken seriously by staff members. A record will be kept of incidents. The form/class teacher of the victim will be responsible for this and will be required to give a copy of report and the action taken to the Assistant



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Head. Older pupils may be asked to write a report themselves. In order to ensure effective monitoring of such occurrences, and to facilitate co-ordinated action, all proven incidences of bullying should be reported to the Head of School.

Upon discovery of an incident of bullying, we will discuss with the children the issues appropriate to the incident and to their age and level of understanding. If the incident is not too serious, a problem-solving approach may help. The adult will try to remain neutral and deliberately avoid direct, closed questioning which may be interpreted as accusatory or interrogational in style. Each pupil must be given an opportunity to talk and the discussion should remain focused on finding a solution to the problem and stopping the bullying recurring.

There are various strategies that can be applied if more than one pupil is involved in bullying another. Role-play and other drama techniques can be used as well as Circle Time (during PSD). If held regularly, this can be an effective way of sharing information and provide a forum for discussing important issues such as equal rights, relationships, justice and acceptable behaviour. It can also be used just within the affected group to confront bullying that already exists.

Victims who are worried about openly discussing an incident when the aggressors are present (eg taunting during a lesson) can be encouraged to go to the teacher with a piece of work, using this as a reason to speak to the teacher. Victims need to feel secure in the knowledge that assertive behaviour, and even walking away can be effective ways of dealing with bullying. Setting up a buddy system, or peer counselling possibly with pupils who already hold a position of responsibility, such as School Prefects can also be beneficial. The school councillor will also be informed for feedback and/or any intervention which will be deemed fit.

Parental Involvement

The parents of bullies and their victims will be informed of an incident and the action that has taken place and asked to support strategies proposed to tackle the problem. The bully will also be reminded of the possible consequences of bullying and the sanctions for repeated incidents will be clearly explained to him/her. (Persistent bullies may be excluded from school). A monitoring tool may also be used, usually incorporating a reward for achieving desired behaviour.

Parents are reminded regularly through letters and circulars to inform their children that they must tell someone should they ever be bullied. Keeping information from the school,



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or from their parents, will never help a problem to be solved, and will prolong the period a victim has to suffer.

Whilst there is little history of bullying at Our Lady Immaculate, we believe that one case is one case too many and we believe it is essential to constantly review this policy to ensure we are in a position to strengthen our approach to this issue. Where necessary we have and will call on outside resources to support our action. This policy is seen as an integral part of our Behaviour and Discipline Policy.

*Appendices: DfEE: "Bullying: Don't Suffer in Silence."
Incident Report Form*

Policy first prepared on Sept 2010
Next Review Sept 2020

Staff is asked for feedback for any amendments annually