

St. Mary's Catholic Primary School

ANTI BULLYING POLICY



Mission Statement

"St. Mary's School is a happy place, where we follow Jesus by living, loving, learning and working together."

School motto

"Being the Best We Can Be."

Core Values

Respect, Nurturing, Creativity, Passion, Integrity

At St. Mary's, we aim to create an ethos of good behaviour where pupils treat everyone with respect and have a clear understanding of the right way to behave. Bullying - in all forms - is unacceptable and will not be tolerated.

Our Mission Statement, (*St Mary's School is a safe and happy place, where we follow Jesus by living, loving, learning and working together*) along with our Core Values (*integrity, respect, nurturing, passion and creativity*) truly underpin all that we say and do.

WHAT IS BULLYING?

There is no legal definition of bullying. However, at St. Mary's we define bullying as a form of behaviour that is **deliberate** and **hurtful** and **causes distress, upset** or **physical injury** to **another individual on more than one occasion**. Such actions may continue for weeks, months or even years. These actions may be verbal or physical, hinder academic progress, encourage truancy and make pupils' lives unhappy. Single acts of aggression or insulting behaviour would not normally be viewed as bullying. Such incidents will be dealt with in line with the school's behaviour policy.

It is usually difficult for those being bullied to defend themselves against an abuse of power and a desire to intimidate and dominate.

Bullying behaviour can be subtle and is essentially a covert activity witnessed by children and not adults.

Bullying can occur through several types of anti-social behaviour. It can be:





a). **PHYSICAL**

A child can be physically punched, kicked, hit, spat at, etc.

b). **VERBAL**

Verbal abuse can take the form of name calling. It may be directed towards gender, ethnic origin, physical/social disability, or personality, etc.



c). **EXCLUSION**

A child can be bullied simply by being excluded from discussions/activities, with those they believe to be their friends.



d). **DAMAGE TO PROPERTY OR THEFT**

Pupils may have their property damaged or stolen. Physical threats may be used by the bully in order that the pupil hands over property to them.



e) **INDIRECT ("PSYCHOLOGICAL")**

Spreading nasty rumours

Excluding someone from groups

Moving away as a person approaches

Leaving / passing notes

Failure to speak to acknowledge a person

The "look".



f) **CYBER BULLYING**

Cyberbullying is the use of mobile phones, instant messaging, e-mail, chat rooms or social networking sites such as Facebook and Twitter to harass; threaten or intimidate someone. Cyberbullying is often



done by children, who have increasingly early access to these technologies. The problem is compounded by the fact that a bully can hide behind an electronic veil, disguising his or her true identity. This secrecy makes it difficult to trace the source and encourages bullies to behave more aggressively than they might face-to-face.

Bullying is wrong and damages individual children. We therefore do all we can to prevent it, by developing a school ethos in which bullying is regarded as unacceptable.

We aim, as a school, to produce a safe and secure environment where all can learn without anxiety.

This policy aims to produce a consistent school response to any bullying incidents that may occur.

We aim to make all those connected with the school aware of our opposition to bullying, and we make clear each person's responsibilities with regard to the eradication of bullying in our school.

We aim to create an ethos of good behaviour where pupils treat one another and the school staff with respect because they know that this is the right way to behave. Values of respect for staff and other pupils, an understanding of the value of education, and a clear understanding of how our actions affect others permeate the whole school environment and are reinforced by staff and older pupils who set a good example to the rest.



WE AIM TO

- Involve parents to ensure that they are clear that the school does not tolerate bullying and are aware of the procedures to follow if they believe that their child is being bullied.
- Involve pupils. All pupils understand the school's approach and are clear about the part they can play to prevent bullying, including when they find themselves as bystanders.
- Regularly evaluate and update our approach to take account of developments in technology, for instance updating 'acceptable use' policies for computers
- Implement disciplinary sanctions. The consequences of bullying reflect the seriousness of the incident so that others see that bullying is unacceptable
- Openly discuss differences between people that could motivate bullying, such as religion, ethnicity, disability, gender or sexuality.
- Use specific organisations or resources for help with particular problems.
- Provide effective staff training. Anti-bullying policies are most effective when all school staff understand the principles and purpose of the school's policy, its legal responsibilities regarding bullying, how to resolve problems, and where to seek support. St. Mary's will invest in specialised skills to help their staff understand the needs of all their pupils.



- Work with the wider community such as the police and children's services where bullying is particularly serious or persistent and where a criminal offence may have been committed.
- Make it easy for pupils to report bullying so that they are assured that they will be listened to and incidents acted on. Pupils should feel that they can report bullying which may have occurred outside school including cyber-bullying
- Create an inclusive environment, a safe environment where pupils can openly discuss the cause of their bullying, without fear of further bullying or discrimination
- Celebrate success. Celebrating success is an important way of creating a positive school ethos around the issue.
- Hold an annual Anti-Bullying Week and Parent Assembly; deliver PSHE lessons and SEAL activities to provide our children with regular opportunities to reflect upon bullying and its impact.



THE ROLE OF THE GOVERNORS

The governing body supports the headteacher in all attempts to eliminate bullying from our school. This policy statement makes it very clear that the governing body does not allow bullying to take place in our school, and that any incidents of bullying that do occur are taken very seriously and dealt with appropriately.

The governing body monitors the incidents of bullying that occur and reviews the effectiveness of the school policy regularly. The governors require the headteacher to keep accurate records of all incidents of bullying and to report to the governors on request about the effectiveness of school anti-bullying strategies.

The governing body responds within ten days to any request from a parent to investigate incidents of bullying. In all cases, the governing body notifies the headteacher and asks him/her to conduct an investigation into the case and to report back to a representative of the governing body.



THE ROLE OF THE HEADTEACHER

It is the responsibility of the headteacher to implement the school anti-bullying strategy and to ensure that all staff (both teaching and non-teaching) are aware of the school policy and know how to deal with incidents of bullying. The headteacher reports to the governing body about the effectiveness of the anti-bullying policy during termly governor meetings.

The headteacher ensures that all children know that bullying is wrong, and that it is unacceptable behaviour in this school. The headteacher draws the attention of children to this fact at suitable moments. For example, if an incident occurs, the headteacher may decide to use assembly as a forum in which to discuss with other children why this behaviour was wrong, and why a pupil is being punished.

The headteacher sets the school climate of mutual support and praise for success, so making bullying less likely. When children feel

they are important and belong to a friendly and welcoming school, bullying is far less likely to be part of their behaviour.

In serious cases of bullying, the headteacher may decide to exclude a child during lunchtime or from school for a fixed period.



THE ROLE OF THE TEACHER

Our teachers take all forms of bullying seriously and intervene to prevent incidents from taking place. If a child, or their parents, believes that they are being bullied, the class teacher will keep records of incidents in order to monitor behaviour and to build a complete and accurate picture.

All incidents are shared with the school's leadership team and as necessary this will lead to more formal incident recording, and reporting to the school governing body.

If, as teachers, we become aware of any bullying taking place between members of a class, we deal with the issue immediately. This may involve counselling and support for the victim of the bullying, and punishment for the child who has carried out the bullying. We spend time talking to the child who has bullied: we explain why the action of the child was wrong, and we endeavour to help the child change their behaviour in future.

If a child is repeatedly involved in bullying other children, we inform the headteacher who will then invite the child's parents into the school to discuss the situation. In more extreme cases, for example where these initial discussions have proven ineffective, the headteacher may contact external support agencies for additional guidance.

Teachers attempt to support all children in their class and to establish a climate of trust and respect for all. By praising, rewarding and celebrating the success of all children, we aim to prevent incidents of bullying.



THE ROLE OF PARENTS

Parents, who are concerned that their child might be being bullied, or who suspect that their child may be the perpetrator of bullying, should contact their child's class teacher immediately.

Parents have a responsibility to support the school's anti-bullying policy and to actively encourage their child to be a positive member of the school. When a child has been found to be engaging in bullying, parents are expected to play an active role in supporting the school's action to prevent further occurrences.

PROCEDURE FOR INVESTIGATING ALLEGED INCIDENTS OF BULLYING

1. All reports of bullying, no matter how trivial, will be noted, investigated and dealt with by teachers. A record of all allegations will be kept.
2. Parents of victims and parents of bullies will be informed so they will be in a position to help and support their children.
3. In any alleged incident of bullying, the Class Teacher or Headteacher will speak separately to the pupils involved and will make written notes of details given in an attempt to get both sides of the story. Questions will be asked such as:

"What kind of bullying has taken place?"

"Where did the incident(s) take place?"

"When did the bullying happen?"

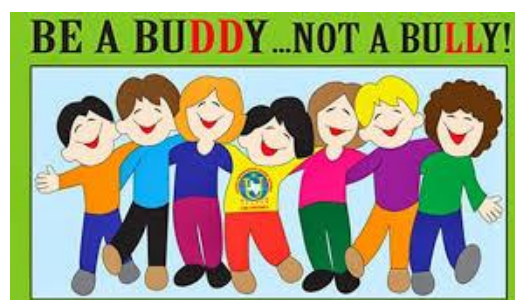
"Who did the bullying?"

4. Should more than one person be involved; each child will be interviewed individually and then the group will meet with the Teacher or Head Teacher. Each member of the group will then be asked for his/her account of what happened to ensure that everyone is clear what everyone else said.

5. If it is concluded that a pupil has been engaged in bullying behaviour, it will be made clear to him/her that he/she is in breach of the agreed Code of Behaviour. The Head Teacher will contact the parents and ask them to call to the school to discuss the incident(s).

6. A course of action will be agreed between the Head Teacher, the parents and the child and a review date of this action will be set. Meetings will take place within two weeks with the bully and the victim separately to ensure there is no further bullying.

We feel that by taking incidents of "bullying" (however rare) very seriously indeed, we can help our children realise that there are better ways of settling disputes or dealing with upsets. Working in partnership with you, the parents, St. Mary's Catholic Primary School will become an even better place for children to enjoy their years of primary education.



MONITORING AND REVIEW

This policy is monitored on a day-to-day basis by the headteacher, who reports to governors about the effectiveness of the policy during termly governor meetings.

This anti-bullying policy is the governors' responsibility, and they review its effectiveness regularly in consultation with the head teacher. Governors should have regard to the gender, age, sexuality and ethnic background of all children involved in bullying incidents.

Reviewed: September 2024