

St. Mary's School's Anti-Bullying Policy (2011)

Rationale behind the policy:

Bullying is present to a greater or lesser extent in all institutions. **All** members of the school community deserve the right to feel valued, equal and respected and be able to come to school without fear. Bullying has a serious effect on a pupil's self esteem, emotional and mental health, which in turn prevents them from developing their full potential and can seriously affect their life chances. Our school's definition of bullying is:

Bullying can be defined as an abuse of power by one or more people through repeated hurtful or aggressive behaviour with the intention to cause emotional or physical harm to another person.

It can be:

Physical – hitting, kicking, stealing or hiding belongings, sexual assault.

Verbal – name calling, insults, offensive or sexual remarks, threatening language.

Relational – social exclusion, spreading rumours or stories, graffiti, defacing property, displaying literature or materials of a racist, sexist or pornographic nature

Indirect. defacing property, displaying literature or materials of a racist, sexist or pornographic nature.

Cyberbullying can include offensive or abusive text or Internet messages.

Bullying can be racist, homophobic or sexual in nature.

Bullying, in any form, will not be tolerated at our school. This includes any member of the school community (staff, students, parents or governors. As a "listening and telling" school we are committed to the creation of positive and safe learning environments for all.

This policy is the outcome of consultation between all members of the school community (pupils, staff teaching and support, Governors and parents) through questionnaires and meetings.

Purpose of the policy:

- To promote the schools aims and values.
- To develop a positive and safe learning environment in which bullying will not be tolerated.
- To promote inclusion, mutual respect, self-esteem and self worth in order to meet the physical, emotional and mental health needs of all members of the school community.
- To raise the standards of behaviour and levels of achievement of all.

Guidelines for implementing policy:

- The policy will be monitored and evaluated annually and will involve all stakeholders.
- There needs to be recognition that anyone can be a bully or victim and that bullying can take many forms.
- It is recognised that the Head teacher and Governing Body have a statutory responsibility for school behaviour and discipline, but that all members of the school community accept collective responsibility for the successful implementation of this policy
- Pupils are encouraged to report all incidents of bullying, whether they are victims or bystanders.

- All staff will respond to student, staff or parental concerns seriously and support the agreed procedures.

Our proactive strategies include:

- We are a listening and telling school. This is the message that will be promoted at all times and with all audiences. There is an agreed collective responsibility to address any incidents of bullying observed.
 - Annually the issue of bullying will be raised in order to maintain awareness of the issue through school assemblies and prominent pictorial displays and posters.
 - Every opportunity to promote whole school initiatives such as anti-bullying week, theatre productions and external speakers will be taken.
 - In our Child Friendly Advice we use the STOP definition. All students are taught what is bullying, what they should do and have 5 named people who they can tell.
- (see attached [Child Friendly Advice](#)).

Parents and the community will be encouraged to actively support the policy at parents' evening in the Spring Term by signing the home-school agreement and promoting the Schools Behaviour Policy.

- The School Council will take part in an anti-bullying working party once a term which includes one governor and one parent.
Peer support systems for pupils will be promoted and training provided for Year 6 pupils.
- The Governing body and SMT will monitor bullying via staff meetings, auditing profomas from pupils and parents and an annual questionnaire on bullying and school practice for students to complete.
- Bullying will be addressed within the PSHE and Citizenship Curriculum particularly through R Time and the SEAL materials.
- All staff will receive training on the identification, prevention and management of bullying. At the start of a new school year procedures for dealing with a bullying incident will be discussed at the first staff meeting of the school year. The policy will be discussed and then distributed to all new staff.

Our Reactive strategies

- In the event of a bullying incident the same procedures will be followed as for all other incidents of poor behaviour (see School Positive Behaviour policy.) Staff will gather evidence and consult with their line manager.
- In all cases details of the incident and action taken will be recorded. Parents of both the victim and bully will be kept fully involved.
- Our prime concern will be the support and protection of the victim. Action will continue until the issue is satisfactorily resolved and the bullying ceases. The actions will be reviewed and modified in light of circumstances and if the bullying continues.
- Strategies to support victims will involve staff and students. Approaches such as circle of friends, no blame approach, buddying and mentoring etc will be considered.
- If it is a serious incident temporary or permanent exclusion will be considered after a full review of the facts.
- Bullying incidents will be logged and monitored on a termly basis by the Head, or named member of the SMT. This information will be given to the Governing body each term as part of the Head's Report.

- A Governor will be nominated to have responsibility for maintaining an overview of behavioural and bullying issues.

Policy written November 2009

To be reviewed annually by the curriculum committee