

St Martin's Garden Primary Anti-Bullying Policy

Introduction

All children have a right to receive their education free from humiliation, oppression and abuse. It is the responsibility of adults to ensure that school provides a caring and protective environment for them. Staff also have the right to expect that their working environment is free from bullying and harassing behaviour.

Bullying of any kind is unacceptable at our school. However, we recognise that bullying behaviour takes place in every school at some time, and affects everyone directly or indirectly. The results of fear and intimidation spread beyond the circle of the child displaying bullying behaviour and victim.

This policy acts in accordance with The Education Act (2002), the Education and Inspections Act (2006), the Equality Act (2010).

What is bullying?

It is important to distinguish between bullying and rough play / arguments / misunderstandings.

There are three elements that are always present in bullying:

- the deliberate, planned and repeated use of aggression (verbal or physical).
- an unequal power relationship.
- the outcome is always painful and distressing for the victim.

Bullying can take many forms. The four main types of bullying are:

- Physical - persistent hitting, pushing, kicking, pinching, other violence and taking things.
- Verbal - name calling, sarcasm, racist remarks, persistent teasing, and threatening, homophobic remarks.
- Indirect - spreading rumours, excluding someone from social groups
- Cyber - all areas of internet, such as email and internet chat room misuse, threats through text messaging and calls. Misuse of associated technology i.e. camera and video facilities.

Bullying is a complicated issue and we recognise that where it arises both the bullied and the bully may need support. We also recognise that although a particular action may not appear to be bullying as described above, action will need to be taken when anyone perceives that they are being bullied. It is important that the whole school community takes care when using the term 'bullying' and that it is not used to describe the more everyday behaviour that occurs where groups of children play together.

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Why does bullying occur?

People who bully might do so because they: want to feel powerful or in control; are jealous; want attention or to look 'clever' in front of others; are being bullied themselves. Bullying can also sometimes occur because people are seen to be different from them or from the 'norm'. Such prejudice based bullying may relate to another person's gender, ethnicity, religion, sexual orientation or disability.

What are the effects of bullying?

Persistent school bullying can result in:

For the victim -

- depression and moodiness
- low self esteem
- shyness and isolation
- poor academic achievement
- absenteeism/truancy
- distress and anxiety
- aggression
- unexplained changes in behaviour
- frequently damaged or 'lost' property

For the person displaying bullying behaviour -

- reliance on intimidation in order to influence others
- isolation and lack of real friends
- tendency to use aggressive behaviour easily

Whole School Anti-Bullying Strategy

We do not accept that bullying or harassment should in any way be tolerated or excused.

We strive to create a school environment where children and adults expect everyone to be safe and happy, and where it is easy to report concerns.

We aim to raise all children's positive self-esteem, so that they have the confidence and social skills to resist bullying behaviour.

We talk openly with children and parent/carers about the possibility of bullying and its effect, and encourage them to talk to staff about any incidents that may worry them. We believe in creating a respectful environment through:

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- National Anti-Bullying Week
- Regular Circle Time in class
- Whole School Assemblies
- Celebrating 'Difference and Diversity Week'
- Weekly PSHE lessons
- A broad Religious Education curriculum

We provide safety and support for victims of bullying and their parent/carers as appropriate to the circumstances.

We will work with children displaying bullying behaviour and their parent/carers in seeking underlying causes for bullying behaviour, and in planning strategies to change that behaviour.

We will treat reports of cyber-bullying involving members of the school community in the same fashion as any other report of bullying.

We will address all allegations of bullying involving members of the school community regardless of whether it has occurred within, or away from, the school setting (Section 89(5) of the Education and Inspections Act 2006).

In the event of bullying becoming a child protection issue i.e. when there is "reasonable cause to suspect that a child is suffering, or is likely to suffer, significant harm" (as defined in the Children Act 1989), the school will follow procedures set out in the Child Protection Policy.

We will ensure that the Anti-Bullying Policy is available on the school website

How can parent/carers support?

We recognise the role that parent/carers play in this policy and ask them to:

- Take an active interest in their child's school day by asking how the day has gone, who they have played with etc. Although we do recognise that not all children chat readily about their day.
- Look out for unusual behaviour in their child, for example being unhappy about school beyond the normal 'ups and downs'.
- Discuss any concerns with us, whether these relate to their child being bullied or bullying others. Their views will be taken seriously and appropriate action will follow.
- Discuss concerns with the child's teacher, Assistant Head Teacher, Deputy Head Teacher or Head Teacher rather than approaching the parent/carer of a child who they believe is bullying.
- Support the school and their child by acknowledging with their child that it is acceptable for children to stand up to bullies, however, the school cannot

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condone physical violence. In school the children are taught to deal with difficulty situations without using physical aggression.

- Reassure their child that they and other adults in school will help them.
- Reassure their child that he/she has done the right thing to tell.

What should children do if they feel bullied?

- Tell an adult or a friend that they trust straight away.
- Remember that bullying is wrong.
- Stay with a group of friends or ask to stay with an adult.
- Stand up to the bully but don't fight back.

What happens if bullying is reported?

- Reports of bullying will always be taken seriously, investigated thoroughly and appropriate action taken.
- The exact way in which we respond to incidents of bullying will depend on the perceived seriousness of the situation, the type of bullying and the individuals involved. However, the emphasis will always be on a caring, listening approach. The school will always aim to handle such situations with sensitivity.
- We will talk and listen to the children involved to find out what has happened and why.
- We will always make it clear that bullying is not tolerated and that those who have reported it have done the right thing in telling someone and asking for help.
- An individual judgement will be made about the bully's behaviour depending on the circumstances involved.
- Some or all of the sanctions in the school's behaviour policy may be applied. In some cases additional sanctions may be required.
- Incidents of bullying are recorded through the Behaviour Forms and entered onto SIMs.
- The parent/carers of children involved will be informed of the school's concerns and any action to be taken as soon as possible.
- Support will be given to the children involved (both the bullied and the bully) on an individual or group basis or as part of a whole class activity. For example, work may take place to raise individual self-esteem, teach calming down strategies or develop appropriate social skills.
- The situation will be monitored to minimise the risk of further incidents.
- Clear expectations of future behaviour will be explained to the children involved. For example, playing under adult supervision, keeping away from another child.

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Links to other policies

- Behaviour Policy
- SEN Policy
- Child Protection Policy
- E Safety Policy

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