

ST MARY'S CATHOLIC PRIMARY SCHOOL

ANTI-BULLYING POLICY

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OWNER	C&S Committee

Introduction

St Mary's Catholic Primary School is committed to providing a safe, positive, valuing and inclusive environment for pupils, staff and parents/carers. Every child should be able to learn in a bully-free environment. All children should feel confident that when coming to school they can spend the day in a place where everyone works together to support each other. The anti-bullying policy and practice plays an important role in this.

St. Mary's Catholic School Anti-Bullying Policy outlines what the School will do to prevent and tackle bullying. The School is committed to developing an anti-bullying culture where no bullying, including between adults or adults and children and young people, will be tolerated. The School will:

- Provide a safe and secure environment where all can learn without anxiety.
- Discuss, monitor and review the anti-bullying policy on a regular basis.
- Support staff to promote positive relationships and identify and tackle bullying appropriately.
- Ensure that pupils are aware that all bullying concerns will be dealt with sensitively and effectively; that pupils feel safe to learn; and that pupils abide by the anti-bullying policy.
- Report back to parents/carers regarding their concerns on bullying and deal promptly with complaints. Parents/carers in turn will work with the school to uphold the anti-bullying policy.
- Seek to learn from good anti-bullying practice elsewhere and utilise support from the Local Authority and other relevant organisations when appropriate.

Links with other School policies and practices

This policy complements the following School policies:

- Safeguarding & Child Protection Policy
- School Behaviour Policy
- E-Safety Policy
- Health and Safety Policy
- SEND Policy Equality Policy
- Whistleblowing Policy
- Complaints policy
- Grievance Policy

Responsibilities

- The School's Governing Body is responsible for monitoring and reviewing this policy.
- The Headteacher, Senior Leaders, teaching and non-teaching staff must aware of this policy and implement it accordingly.
- The Headteacher is responsible for communicating the policy to the School community.
- Pupils are responsible for ensuring they abide by the policy.

Principles informing the School's approach to bullying:

- Bullying behaviour is usually repeated over time, and it is difficult for those being bullied to defend themselves. Although immediate physical safety comes first, all bullying - by a pupil or adult towards another pupil or adult - whatever the motivation or method, is unacceptable and will not be tolerated. Bullying always has the intention of causing deliberate harm.
- Bullying is always wrong as it can make another person feel upset or frightened.
- All adults in the School's community (staff, governors and parents/carers) are expected to present positive role models to children.
- Bullying is a shared problem and staff and parents will need to work together in partnership to resolve incidents.
- The safety and welfare of the children concerned will always be central to decisions about actions taken in response to bullying.
- Anti-bullying approaches will be consistent with the values of a Catholic community and preparing children for life in an inclusive society. These include incorporating an acceptance of and valuing of difference, the need to cope with difficult individuals and the role of forgiveness.
- When incidents have been dealt with, all parties should be supported and enabled to move on positively. In keeping with the School's Catholic ethos, it is our aim that in the resolution of incidents pupils should wherever possible be reconciled.

Forms of bullying covered by this Policy

Bullying can happen to anyone. This policy covers all types of bullying, including that which is related to: race, religion or culture; Special Educational Needs or Disability (SEND); appearance or health conditions; sexual orientation; young carers, or looked after children, or otherwise related to home circumstances; sexist or sexual bullying; and all forms of cyber bullying.

Bullying can include:

- Verbal bullying – such as mimicking, saying nasty things about family, clothes or appearance, name-calling, taunting, mocking, making offensive comments and deliberately embarrassing or humiliating others.
- Kicking; hitting; taking belongings, hurting, hair pulling, pushing people around, deliberately disrupting work or play and intimidation.
- Inappropriate text messaging and electronic messaging (including through web-sites, social networking sites, etc).
- Sending offensive or degrading images by phone or via the internet.
- Indirect bullying – such as deliberately leaving others out and making them feel isolated, getting others to be hurtful or unkind, gossiping, excluding people from groups and spreading hurtful and untruthful rumours.
- Psychological bullying – such as intimidation, threats and looks to make another child feel uncomfortable or fearful.
- Other types of bullying may be motivated by race, religion, gender and sexual orientation, or because a child is adopted or has caring issues.
- Bullying also includes any subtle actions which can build up for individuals over time, eroding self-esteem and building unhappiness or a climate of fear.

The School will always avoid labelling pupils as either victims or bullies. It is important that pupils who have been the targets of bullying behaviours are able to see that this experience will end, and that it is not the result of something about themselves that has attracted or deserved such treatment by others.

Similarly:

- Children who have engaged in bullying behaviour will be expected to resolve the matter and change their behaviour. There is no typical bully; many children may use bullying behaviours from time to time.
- Not all hurtful behaviour is bullying, but all hurtful behaviour is unacceptable in school. The following are examples of hurtful behaviour which may not be bullying:

- Children may fall out with their friends and engage in hurtful behaviour. Such experiences can be extremely distressing to the individuals involved.
- Children may retaliate against the hurtful behaviour of others. Although not all hurtful behaviour is intentional, all hurtful behaviours are a matter of concern and will be dealt with by the School. Where pupils cause harm or distress without intent, the impact of their behaviour will be pointed out and any continuance will be regarded as intentional. Similarly, all unsafe behaviours and those making the school community an unsafe environment will be dealt with.

Strategies for preventing bullying

At all times children's concerns are the School's concern. All concerns will be taken seriously, and all concerns will be treated with promptly and sensitively.

The School recognises that children can sometimes be reluctant to seek help and may tell a friend or parent. Pupils will be encouraged to express their concerns about themselves and others and to seek help and support whenever they need it. All incidents considered to be bullying (as defined above) will be recorded and monitored. The process for recording incidents is used to inform preventative strategies. Pupils will understand the school's procedures for responding to bullying and know that they are safe.

It is important for children to know that procedures are being followed. In order to encourage pupils to continue to express their concerns, where appropriate, information will be shared across the School about bullying incidents having been dealt with and resolved.

- Assemblies will be used from time to time to reinforce positive anti-bullying messages and to raise issues concerning bullying within the context of a Christian message.
- Activities across the curriculum (largely in Personal, Health and Social Education, R.E. and English) will be used to develop pupils' understanding of bullying, and this includes key Christian messages such as respect and forgiveness. Children are taught that each person is special and unique and that differences should be celebrated and should not be the focus of negative behaviour.
- In order to build children's resilience and reduce their vulnerability, pupils will be coached and guided in developing coping strategies and in how to respond positively to hurtful behaviour. Pupils will be encouraged to look out for each other and to show their care for others by reporting their concerns for others.
- Guidance is given to pupils who display behaviour which raises concern.

Other preventative strategies

School staff will:

- Develop a whole-school approach to developing pupils' social and emotional skills, thus preventing bullying, promoting good behaviour and creating an environment that prevents bullying from being a serious problem.
- Reward and celebrating good social skills.
- Offer peer support.
- Develop school/class rules.
- Involve the children in decision making over issues that affect them.
- Involve children in Pupil council meetings and develop actions to improve the school community.
- Help to resolve issues of unacceptable behaviour with the child/children involved.
- Provide individual support and/or small-group work for pupils related to social and emotional skills.

Procedures for dealing with incidents of bullying and unkind behaviour (including staff responsibilities)

- All incidents of bullying must be reported, and all such reports taken seriously.
- The viewpoint of the person who feels bullied will contribute to understanding and establishing the seriousness of the incident.
- When a child reports a concern to an adult, the latter will listen carefully and sympathetically. They should take reassurance the child that their concerns are taken seriously and will be investigated. Adults involved should make notes at or as soon as possible after the concern has been raised.
- The adult concerned should discuss the incident with the child's class teacher or phase team leader.
- Members of the SLT must be made aware of the concern as soon as possible.
- Where a parent raises a concern, in the first instance this should always be with the class teacher as they are likely to understand the individuals involved. The class teacher will make notes and bring the concern to SLT as soon as possible.

Investigating the concern

The School recognises that speed of response is important and that wherever possible incidents must be resolved quickly. However, significant incidents will involve investigation, and this can cause delay to the resolution. The School will need to take the time necessary to respond to and resolve incidents appropriately, while ensuring the safety of the child who feels bullied.

- Class teachers/phase team leaders/SLT will talk to all those involved. This will include other children who may have witnessed unacceptable behaviours or been involved. All adults will make accurate notes of conversations.
- Single incidents of bullying behaviour must be reported to and be dealt with by the class teacher. The Headteacher/Deputy Head/SL will be kept informed of any incidents dealt with by the class teacher so that they hold the overview across the school.
- Children who have raised concerns will be spoken with and reassured. Adults will make it very clear to the child that they have the right to be safe and secure, and to be treated with dignity and respect. They will be assured that they have done the right thing by speaking up.
- Follow up and ongoing monitoring will always be conducted by the class teacher whilst keeping the head teacher informed, even if it is felt that the matter has been resolved. If the behaviour dealt with by class teachers continues, it will be referred to the Headteacher/Deputy Head/SL.
- All repeated bullying behaviour should be reported directly to the Headteacher/Deputy Head/SL. Significant incidents will be entered in the behaviour incidents book and all parents whose children are directly involved will be notified of significant incidents.

Attached are forms to be used for reporting and monitoring incidents of bullying:

- Appendix A: BULLYING THRESHOLD AND MONITORING FORM - Initial investigation into allegation of bullying.
- Appendix B: BULLYING REPORT – Follow-up investigation into allegation of bullying.

Principles to define bullying behaviour

- *Bullying is intentionally hurtful.* It is the deliberate, unjustifiable and unprovoked use of aggressive behaviour. It includes actions that cause physical, emotional or mental hurt to the victim and actions that violate another person's freedom and rights.

- *Bullying is a repeated experience.* Being bullied is usually the experience of persistent or repeated anti-social behaviour. However, occasionally there can be single incidents which constitute bullying because of the fear and intimidation that project beyond that initial incident.
- *Bullying also involves an inequality of power.* Those being bullied find it difficult to reject or deal with the offending behaviour, or those involved in the bully behaviour have power over the victim. Some power imbalances can be subtle or build up over time, but more common examples include that they are bigger/stronger/older, have more friends, are more established in the School or care less about the consequences of their actions. Bullying behaviour can involve individuals or groups.

Signs of bullying

There are times when children will suffer in silence out of fear of what might happen if bullying is reported. It is the responsibility of the whole School community to report where they are aware of the following behaviours. A pupil is known to or reported to be:

- Reluctant or unwilling to come to school.
- Absent from school more than usual.
- Withdrawn and anxious.
- Crying at night or having nightmares.
- Performing less well at school.
- Coming home with damaged belongings or possessions going missing.
- Asking for money or stealing money or losing money on a regular basis.
- Suffering from unexplained bruises or cuts.
- Becoming more aggressive and bullying others.
- Losing appetite or complaining of being hungry.

Forms

- Appendix A: BULLYING THRESHOLD AND MONITORING FORM - Initial investigation into allegation of bullying.
- Appendix B: BULLYING REPORT – Follow-up investigation into allegation of bullying.

END

BULLYING THRESHOLD AND MONITORING FORM
Initial investigation into allegation of bullying

This form is to be completed and returned to the Headteacher for review and monitoring.

Completed by (Name):

Role:

Date:

Name and role of individual/s making the allegation e.g. pupil, parent/carers, MDSA:

Form of referral e.g. verbal report, letter, phone call, witness statement, targeted child seeking support:

Details gathered to date:

Action taken to date:

BULLYING REPORT
Follow-up investigation into allegation of bullying

Where a Bullying Threshold Report has been submitted, for each incident where evidence of bullying is found this form is to be completed and submitted to the Headteacher for review and monitoring.

An investigation will be led by Headteacher or senior staff member delegated by the Headteacher to a senior staff member who is not a primary witness to the incident.

Focus of Bullying

	Definitely applies	Possibly applies
<i>Ability/Disability</i>		
<i>Age</i>		
<i>Appearance</i>		
<i>Social background</i>		
<i>Where they live</i>		
<i>Gender</i>		
<i>Maturity</i>		
<i>Ethnicity*</i>		
<i>Religion*</i>		
<i>Sexuality*</i>		
<i>Physical Attributes</i>		

Tick all the elements that apply in your understanding of the incident(s):

*Refer to County Guidance on Racial and other discrimination issues

*Refer to County Guidelines on Racial and other discriminatory incidents

Manifestation of Bullying

Isolation/ignoring	
Teasing	
Verbal abuse or name calling	
Expressions of prejudice/stereotype to deliberately offend	
Threatened physical assault	
Actual physical assault	

Targeted graffiti or hurtful note writing	
Cyber/Online bullying	
Theft or hiding of another's belongings	
Other (clarify)	

Pupils Involved

<i>Victim(s) include Year Group/class</i>	<i>Offender(s) include Year Group/class</i>

Description of Incident(s)

Record a precise account including places, date, times and any witnesses/bystanders. Attach any further information (e.g. pupils' account, witness accounts) Use additional sheets if required.

Action Taken

Record all steps (include meetings, letters, investigations, sanctions, Year group or whole school assemblies, whole staff or whole parent messaging, etc).

Summary of those notified and/or involved – not all may apply	Details – Dates etc
Class Teacher	
Team Leader	
Senior Leadership Team	
Head Teacher	
Victim Parents – Initial Contact, if not informant (Phone/In person/Letter)	
Victim Parents invited to school	
Offender Parents – Initial Contact, if not informant (Phone/In person/Letter)	
Offender Parents invited to school	
Local Authority – <i>Especially relates to Racial Incidents</i>	
Police, Ambulance Service,	
Social Services	
Governing Body	
Others (specify)	

Conclusion and Next Steps

What was the outcome? What has been learnt? What can be done to stop it recurring? (*Staff training, school/parent-wide messaging, external diversity awareness, etc.*)

Position	Name	Signature	Date	Comment
Reporting Staff member				
SLT Member				
Head				
Governing Body				
Child or Parent/carer of person being bullied				