ANTI-BULLYING POLICY

Date reviewed: December 2022

Date for next review: December 2024

The aim of the Anti-Bullying Policy is to ensure that pupils learn in a supportive, caring and safe environment without fear of being bullied. Bullying is an anti-social behaviour and affects everyone; it is unacceptable and will not be tolerated. Bullying behaviours do not just occur within the relationships between pupils, but can also be demonstrated by adults towards children, children towards adults and between adults within the school community. We are committed to developing an antibullying culture, whereby no bullying, including between adults or adults and children will be tolerated. Instead, all adults should model the behaviour that we expect from children, living out the command of Jesus Christ:

"Always treat others as you would like them to treat you." Matthew 7: 12

Only when issues of bullying are addressed will we be able to fulfil our Mission Statement that at St Mary's we are learning to live like Jesus, in all that we say and think and do.

Definition of bullying

"Bullying is behaviour by an individual or a group, repeated over time, that intentionally hurts another individual or group either physically or emotionally." ('Preventing and Tackling Bullying: Advice for head teachers, staff and governing bodies', DfE, 2014)

Bullying differs from teasing / falling out between friends or other types of aggressive behaviour in that:

* There is a deliberate intention to hurt and / or humiliate
* There is a power imbalance that makes it hard for the victim to defend themselves • It is usually persistent[1]

What are the types of bullying?

There are four main types of bullying, and these can be carried out in a range of ways:
* Physical (hitting, kicking, and other forms of physical assault);
* Verbal (name calling, taunting, mocking, making offensive comments)
* Social (gossiping and spreading hurtful and untruthful rumours, excluding someone from social groups).
* Cyber bullying (gossiping or spreading hurtful rumours via technology, inappropriate text messaging or emails)

Although bullying can occur between individuals, it can often take place in the presence (virtually or physically) of others, who become the 'bystanders' or 'accessories'. As part of our anti-bullying culture at St. Mary's School, we strongly believe that it is not acceptable to be a bystander or an accessory to bullying, and that all instances of bullying in our school community must be reported for issues to be addressed.

What are the indicators that bullying is taking place?

Victims of bullying will respond in a range of different ways. At St. Mary's we are particularly alert when children show changes in behaviour, such as becoming shy and nervous, withdrawn, feigning illness, having unusual absence patterns and becoming more clingy with adults. There may be evidence of changes in work patterns and reluctance to socialise with the other children. All teachers and support staff are alert to the signs of bullying and will act promptly when bullying is suspected or reported.

---

[1] Occasionally an incident might be deemed to be bullying even if the behaviour has not been repeated or persistent – if it fulfils all other descriptions of bullying. This possibility should be considered, particularly in cases of sexist, racist or homophobic bullying and where children / adults with disabilities are involved.

Strategies for preventing bullying

In line with our Behaviour Policy, we focus on the development of positive behaviours rather than merely addressing situations where children have made poor behaviour choices. Using our Therapeutic Behaviour Management Approach, we are able to know the emotional needs of cohorts of children and provide the support and opportunities that they need to develop. Their emotional literacy is a key element within this. We also promote positive social relationships though:

- Use of praise and rewards, not only for academic work but also for social behaviours and living out our core values.

- Anti-bullying week annually in November

- Delivery of a faith-based RSE programme

- Specific curriculum input on areas of concern such as Cyberbullying and Internet Safety

- Staff training and development

- Inclusion team and Learning Mentors

- Pupil voice

Investigating concerns:
The following steps may be taken when dealing with potential incidents:

- The incident will be addressed by the member of staff who has been approached

- A detailed account of the incident will be recorded and given to the Head teacher or a member of the Leadership Team

- The Head teacher or a member of the Leadership Team will interview all concerned.

- Records of the discussions will be kept and the Head teacher will be informed if they have not yet been involved in the process.

If an instance of bullying is confirmed:

- All staff will be made aware so that the situation can be closely monitored

- Parents will be informed

- Sanctions will be used as appropriate in line with the Behaviour Policy. This can include exclusion from play and lunch times, internal exclusion, fixed term exclusion and permanent exclusion.[2]

- Where it is deemed that there is a risk of / has been significant harm, St. Mary's School will follow its Child Protection Policy through referring to Social Services and / or the Police.

Cyber Bullying
This school is committed to teaching children the knowledge and skills to be able to use computing and ICT effectively, safely and responsibly.   We also aim:

- To ensure that pupils, staff and parents understand what cyber bullying is and how it can be tackled

- To ensure that practices and procedures are agreed to prevent incidents of cyber bullying.

- To ensure that reported incidents of cyber bullying are dealt with effectively and quickly.

Understanding Cyber bullying:
Cyber bullying is the use of ICT (such as a mobile phone and or the internet) to bully another person. It can take place anywhere and involve many people. Anybody can be targeted including pupils and school staff. It can include

---

[2] Any decision to exclude a child is never taken lightly, and will be made with reference to the Department for Education's 'Exclusion from maintained schools, academies and pupil referral units in England' guidance of 2012.

threats, intimidation, harassment, cyber-stalking, vilification, defamation, exclusion, peer rejection, impersonation, unauthorised publication of private information or images etc.

Procedures to Prevent Cyber bullying:

- Staff, pupils, parents and governors to be made aware of issues surrounding cyber bullying.

- Pupils and parents will be urged to report all incidents of cyber bullying to the school.

- Staff CPD will assist in learning about current technologies. Pupils will be involved in developing and communicating this policy through Digital Leaders.

- Pupils will learn about cyber bullying through Computing, PSHE, assemblies, anti-bullying week activities and other curriculum projects.

- Pupils will sign an 'Acceptable Use of ICT' contract and be given advice on cyber-bullying.

- Parents will be provided with information and advice on how to tackle cyber bullying

- Parents will be expected to sign an 'Acceptable Use of ICT' contract and to discuss its meaning with their children.

- Pupils, parents and staff will be involved in reviewing and revising this policy and school procedure.

- All reports of cyber bullying will be investigated, recorded, stored in the Head teacher's office and monitored regularly.

- The police will be contacted in cases of actual or suspected illegal content.

Useful websites:

www.kidsmart.org.uk/beingsmart www.respectme.org.uk/cyberbullying
www.childnet.int.org   www.anti-bullyingalliance.org
www.antibullying.net   www.bbc.co.uk/schools/bullying
www.chatdanger.com www.ceop.gov.uk www.childline.org.uk
www.dfes.gov.uk/bullying
www.kidscape.org.uk

Guidance for parents and carers:

https://www.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/44
4865/Advice_for_parents_on_cyberbullying.pdf
 http://www.childnet.com/ufiles/Supporting-young-people-online.pdf

At St Mary's Catholic Primary School, we take this bullying as seriously as all other types of bullying and, therefore, will deal with each situation individually. An episode may result in a simple verbal warning. It might result in a parental discussion. Clearly, more serious cases will result in further sanctions.

Responding to Bullying

The school's response to bullying does not end with applying a sanction in line with the Behaviour Policy. Both the pupil and the pupil bullying will receive support through our Therapeutic Behaviour Management approach. It is important that the opportunity to discuss the experience with a member of staff is offered and what happened or is happening is explored with all involved. Ensuring that continuous support is given to both parties is imperative. Through reassurance and continuous support, it is important that the pupil bullying is supported to see why and how their actions were bullying, and explore and develop ways forward in preventing this in the future. Reconciliation between those involved should always be attempted. Behaviour of both the pupil and the pupil bullying will be monitored after the event. All parties' parents or guardians will be informed to help support all pupils involved.

Monitoring, Evaluation and Review

The school will review this Policy biannually and assess its implementation and effectiveness. The Policy will be promoted and implemented throughout the school community.