

St. Mary's Catholic Primary School

Anti-Bullying Policy

Date: September 2016

Review Date: Autumn 2017

Compiled by the Staff

Agreed by Governors:

At St. Mary's the Mission Statement makes clear that we aim to provide for our pupils the best possible quality of education, guided by the teachings of Christ and His Church. This is only achievable if the pupils are provided with a caring, friendly and safe environment so they can learn in a relaxed and secure environment.

We do not condone bullying in any shape or form. We feel that prevention is better than cure. Preventative tactics are put into operation throughout the school day and all incidents are recorded consistently. The class teacher will deal with any incidents but if it is felt necessary, the Headteacher will be informed. All parents will have access to a copy of this policy.

What is bullying?

Bullying can be described as being "a deliberate act done to cause distress solely in order to give a feeling of power, status or other gratification to the bully".

Bullying usually has three common features:

It is deliberate and hurtful

It is repeated over a period of time

It is difficult for those being bullied to defend themselves

Bullying can involve physical or verbal attacks, name calling, malicious gossip, damaging or stealing the property of the victim, cyber bullying or coercing the victim into acts which they do not wish to do.

Bullying is the wilful, conscious desire to hurt, threaten or frighten someone else.

Bullying in the form of emotional or psychological aggression is less visible to a member of staff but very painful to the victim. No-one at St. Mary's will tolerate physical, emotional or psychological bullying.

The school works very hard to ensure all pupils know the difference between bullying and simply "falling out".

It is the right of every child and member of staff at St Mary's to feel safe from verbal, mental and physical abuse on their way to and from school and whilst in school.

Vulnerable groups

Within our school community, we have a number of pupils who may be considered more vulnerable to bullying on the basis of their perceived difference from others. These vulnerability factors may include race and ethnicity, emotional vulnerability, EAL and communication needs, disability, learning needs and Looked after Children. As a school, we monitor carefully and ensure that identified children remain safe at all times. The Senior Leaders review any changing circumstances or particular needs of individuals. Additional support is provided

What we ask pupils to do

- If a pupil is being bullied, a teacher must be informed, preferably the class teacher or an adult they feel comfortable with.
- If any pupil feels that a complaint has not been dealt with, the Headteacher or Deputy Head must be informed.
- Always tell a parent or friend.
- Talk about the incident and explain why you find it hurtful or unacceptable. It is important to speak out.
- Encourage children to use the Worry/Suggestion Boxes in each class or sit on the Buddy benches in the playground.

What we ask parents to do

- Reinforce the message that bullying is not acceptable behaviour. No-one should hurt or cause upset to others.
- Never tell your children to hit or kick anyone they do not like or who upsets them.
- Encourage your child to talk about incidents.
- Encourage your child to tell a member of staff.
- If your child is unable to do this, please approach the Class teacher yourself.
- If you have raised the matter and still feel it has not been dealt with, please see the Headteacher or Deputy Head immediately.
- Never leave matters to sort themselves out. There is no point in telling a teacher. 'My little boy /girl has been punched again by_____'. This has been going on for some weeks and nothing has been done about it!' when the reality is that the teacher was not told about the previous incident.
- If your child has done something wrong, please support the teacher. The teacher must have your full co-operation if progress is to be made.

Our commitment to Pupils and Parents

We will do everything we can to ensure that no child is bullied at St. Mary's. If any matter is drawn to our attention, we will investigate what has happened and deal with the children concerned. We will take incidents very seriously.

Action taken when incidents have been reported

- The initial responsibility for discipline in the classroom situation lies with the class teacher. No teacher will accept poor behaviour.
If punishment is deemed necessary, the school guidelines must be followed. (See school prospectus for parents)
- If a matter is regarded as a severe breach of discipline, then the Headteacher or Deputy Head should be informed, along with the parents.
Such incidents will be discussed with the Headteacher and Deputy Head with appropriate action taken.
- All staff are reminded that it is against the law to administer corporal punishment to a child. Any member of staff doing so is open to a civil charge of assault.
- All reported incidents to the Headteacher are written in the behaviour book with action taken.
- If incidents occur on the playground, the teacher on duty or midday supervisor will inform the appropriate class teacher.

Monitoring and Evaluation

This policy will be monitored and the effectiveness will be evaluated in the light of the numbers of bullying incidents recorded, staff response to bullying behaviour and any concerns of children, staff and parents regarding bullying. All members of the SLT are responsible for responding to incidents of bullying and the Headteacher, along with the Deputy, has specific responsibility for ensuring the procedures of this policy are followed. The Governors with oversight of this policy is the Learning and Achievement Committee to whom numbers of incidents will be reported annually.

Recognising likely Victims

Victims may be pupils who:

- are new to the class or school
- have special educational needs
- are different in appearance, speech or background
- suffer from low esteem
- are more anxious or nervous
- are in the wrong place at the wrong time and who act incorrectly
- have high levels of absenteeism
- appear lonely with few friends and have difficulty setting themselves in a peer group
- show deterioration of work

Anti - bullying Action

- action will be taken as quickly as possible
- the victim will be reassured and offered concrete help and advice
Victims need their self-esteem raised through activities designed to improve their social skills
- the school will make it plain to the bully that we disapprove. However, bullies need help too. They need to be made aware that they can gain satisfaction through working with others rather than in confrontational or competitive ways
- school management and/ or other appropriate persons will be informed
- colleagues will be informed if the incident arose out of a situation where everyone should be vigilant
- the Headteacher will inform both sets of parents and have a constructive plan to offer either side
- persistent bullying will have a fixed term exclusion and in very serious cases, a child may be excluded permanently.

Preventative Tactics - 'Prevention is better than cure!'

- All pupils should know the school cares about bullying (discussed in PSHE lessons)
- All pupils should know that it is important to speak out and say no to any form of bullying.
- At St. Mary's, the Deputy Headteacher (Mrs Phipps) is responsible for pastoral care
- There are clear procedures for integrating new pupils into our school (monitors, playground buddies, they are shown around the school).
- The curriculum is used wisely. Messages about acceptable behaviour are transmitted in the classroom
- There are positive ways of getting the message across through drama, discussion and games. Discussion and role play is used to explain issues related to bullying and to give individual children confidence to deal with bullying. Assemblies are also used to raise awareness. PSHE sessions are used as a means of discussion whereby the teacher allows children the opportunity to speak about an issue. These sessions can provide a forum for

discussion of important issues, relationships, equal rights, friendship, justice and acceptable behaviour.

- Parents are informed. They should know that the school acts to prevent bullying and does not just deal with bullying incidents.
- Hidden corners are regularly visited by staff.
- All non-teaching staff follow our guidelines. The implementation of the anti – bullying programme needs to be carried out in the same manner
- The Midday Supervisors must inform the class teachers of any incidents.
- Staff will investigate every allegation of bullying recording the date, time, place and names of children involved. Children’s play patterns will be observed by the staff and notes made of all children who appear isolated or unhappy. Class teachers will be informed.

All serious incidents must be reported to the Headteacher.