



Anti – Bullying Policy

Approved	November 2024	Review period	Two years
Next Review	November 2026		

SS Mary and John Catholic Primary School



Anti - Bullying Policy

Our Mission Statement

Working together with God to achieve a better future for everyone.

Policy on Anti-Bullying

At St. Mary and John's Catholic Primary School we recognise that all children have rights as outlined in the UN Convention. As duty bearers, we have the responsibility to respect these rights and are committed to supporting our children through their education and to ensure that they are rights-holders.

Affirmation

St. Mary and John's recognise that bullying is a serious issue. Respect for self and others as a part of God's creation is at the heart of our School Aims and everyone is responsible for ensuring the safety of everyone else in the school. We recognise the damage bullying can cause to the life of the victim, the bully and the school as a whole. We are committed to challenging the assumption that bullying is inevitable and are working towards stopping completely.

Introduction

It is a government requirement that all schools have an anti-bullying policy. In 2003, Ofsted published Bullying: Effective Action in Secondary Schools. This was followed by DCSF guidance for schools under two headings: Don't Suffer in Silence and Bullying – A Charter for Action. This policy reflects this guidance.

We aim to provide our pupils with their 'right to give your opinion and for adults to listen and take it seriously' as stated in Article 12

The right to 'choose your own friends and join or set up groups, as long as it isn't harmful to others' as stated in Article 15

The right to 'be protected from being hurt and mistreated, in body or mind' as stated in Article 19.

The right to have an 'education that helps you use and develop your talents and abilities. It should also help you learn to live peacefully, protect the environment and respect other people' as stated in Article 29

Aims

The aim of this policy is to provide a definition of bullying and to establish some basic guidelines. These are:

- to assist in creating an ethos in which attending school is a positive experience for all members of the school community
- to make it clear that all forms of bullying are unacceptable at school

- to enable everyone to feel safe while at school and encourage pupils to report incidences of bullying
- to deal effectively with bullying
- to support and protect victims of bullying and ensure they are listened to
- to help and support children who bully to change their attitudes as well as their behaviour and understand why it needs to change
- to liaise with parents and other appropriate members of the school community
- to ensure all members of the school community feel responsible for combating bullying

We aim to make all those connected with the school aware of our opposition to bullying, and we make clear each person's responsibilities with regard to the eradication of bullying in our school and therefore, ensure that each child feels safe and protected. (Article 19 CRN)

Definition

DFE guidance defines bullying as actions that are meant to be hurtful, and which happen on a regular basis. Bullying can be direct (either physical or verbal) or indirect (e.g. being ignored or not spoken to). It is different from one-off actions or flare ups which may happen spontaneously and even be seen by one person as a joke or something that got out of hand, although these incidents are also taken seriously because of their effect on the victim and because failure to act may lead to them being repeated.

Several forms of bullying can be identified:

- Physical abuse – pushing, hitting, kicking, biting, spitting etc;
- Verbal abuse – name calling, taunting, teasing etc;
- Emotional abuse – non-verbal signals, being left out of activities;
- Sexual Abuse and Sexual Harassment – sexual comments, remarks, jokes, inappropriate touching and online sexual harassment, which may be standalone or part of a broader pattern of abuse.
- Taking other people's possessions without asking;
- Damaging property
- Intimidation of any kind;
- Extortion;
- Racism;
- Homophobia;
- Via electronic means – cyber bullying via phone, internet

Following any report of child-on-child sexual violence or sexual harassment offline or online, the school will follow the general safeguarding principles set out in Keeping Children Safe in Education (KCSIE) - especially Part 5. The Designated Safeguarding Lead (or deputy) will advise on the school's initial response. Each incident will be considered on a case-by-case basis.

Why is bullying different from unacceptable behaviour?

It is deliberately hurtful behaviour aimed directly at an individual or group and **it is repeated over a period of time**. It is difficult for those being bullied to defend themselves physically or verbally. Bullying is unprovoked behaviour which intimidates or causes fear. SS Mary and John's School will not tolerate bullying by any member of its community, be they pupil, member of staff or visitor. Bullying will be taken seriously and dealt with quickly and promptly.

Prevention

The school is committed to stopping bullying altogether. In order to do this the school will:

- Ensure whole-school and class rules reaffirm expected behaviour
- Take seriously and investigate all complaints from pupils, staff and parents where a child has been physically or emotionally harmed, even if these are one-off incidents
- Have A Friendship focus week every year to promote the school's bullying policy and anti-bullying strategies.
- Deliver anti-bullying lessons in Citizenship, PSHE and RE lessons, circle time and other relevant subject areas.
- Deliver training to staff on the Anti-Bullying Policy and other associated issues, ensuring they are aware of symptoms of bullying.
- Ensure that the Anti-Bullying Policy is available
- Promote a high level of vigilance from staff, pupils and parents
- Ensure sanctions are applied to punish bad and hurtful behaviour

Reporting

The school is committed to removing the culture of secrecy from bullying. We recognise that many young people will be put off reporting because they fear that it will make matters worse. In order to encourage pupils to report bullying the school will:

- Take each allegation of bullying seriously and investigate it, guaranteeing anonymity if appropriate
- Carry out regular pupil surveys including through circle time/class councils allowing pupils to disclose if they or others are being bullied
- Ensure pupils understand bullying is not acceptable and how bullies and victims will be treated
- Provide an open door policy for parents who have concerns
- Consult with pupils about the effectiveness of anti-bullying strategies and their ideas for improvement (Article 12 CRN – pupils are entitled to give their opinions).

In order to ensure the accuracy of reporting, written and/or verbal testimony will be taken from the victim, the perpetrator and any witnesses. These will be treated sensitively and kept confidential. Recording in order to monitor the frequency with which incidents of bullying take place the school will record each incident of bullying centrally.

The following information will be recorded:

- The pupil's name and class.
- Date and name of person making the report
- Brief details about the alleged incident.
- Who dealt with it.
- What happened and any findings
- What action was taken

The School recognises how traumatic being the victim of bullying can be. We are committed to providing each victim with the support they need to continue with their education in an environment free from the fear of bullying.

Sanctions

It is important for the victim of bullying, the bully, and the school community as a whole that there are clearly defined consequences for any act of bullying. Each case will be dealt with individually, but the types of sanctions available to the school, in line with our Behaviour Policy, are:

- Withdrawal of break times and lunchtimes.
- Time out within school
- Fixed term exclusion.
- Permanent exclusion.

The role of the Governing Body

The Local Governing Board of SS Mary and John's School will review this policy and will be responsible for its implementation. They will also determine its success through the Head Teacher by monitoring reported incidents and actions taken. In the event of bullying

incidents not being dealt with to the satisfaction of parents, the governors will also receive representations via the Academy's Complaints Procedure.

The role of the Head Teacher.

It is the responsibility of the Head Teacher to implement the school anti-bullying strategy, and to ensure that all staff (both teaching and non-teaching) are aware of the school policy, and know how to identify and deal with incidents of bullying. The Head Teacher reports to the Governing Body about the effectiveness of the anti-bullying policy on request. The Head Teacher ensures that all children know that bullying is wrong, and that it is unacceptable behaviour in this school.

The Head Teacher draws the attention of children to this fact at suitable moments. For example, if an incident occurs, the Head Teacher may decide to use an assembly as the forum in which to discuss with other children why this behaviour was wrong, and why a pupil is being punished. The Head teacher ensures that all staff, including lunchtime staff, receive sufficient training to be equipped to identify and deal with all incidents of bullying. The Head Teacher sets the school climate of mutual support and praise for success, so making bullying less likely. When children feel they are important and belong to a friendly and welcoming school, bullying is far less likely to be part of their behaviour.

The role of the teacher and support staff

All the staff in our school take all forms of bullying seriously, and seek to prevent it from taking place. Each class has a behaviour log where incidents are recorded. If teachers witness an act of bullying, they will refer it to their Phase Leader. Teachers and support staff do all they can to support the child who is being bullied. If a child is being bullied over a period of time, then, after consultation with the head teacher, the teacher informs the child's parents or carers.

All incidents of bullying are logged on the School Bullying Log. When any bullying has taken place between members of a class, the teacher will deal with the issue immediately. This may involve counselling and support for the victim, and punishment for the offender. Time is spent talking to the child who has done the bullying, explaining to them why their action was wrong and how they should change their behaviour in future. If a child is repeatedly involved in bullying, we inform the Head Teacher and the SENDCO. We then invite the child's parents or carers into the school to discuss the situation. In more extreme cases, e.g. where these initial discussions have proved ineffective, the Head Teacher may contact external support agencies, such as the social services.

All members of staff routinely attend training, which equips them to identify bullying and to follow school policy and procedures with regard to behaviour management. Teachers use a range of methods to help prevent bullying and to establish a climate of trust, respect and safety for all. (See Article 19) They use drama, role-play, stories etc., within the formal curriculum, to help pupils understand the feelings of bullied children, and to practise the restraint required to avoid lapsing into bullying behaviour. Circle time is used to praise,

reward and celebrate the success of all children, and thus to help create a positive atmosphere.

The role of parents and carers

Parents and carers who are concerned that their child might be being bullied, or who suspect that their child may be the perpetrator of bullying, should contact their child's class teacher immediately. If they are not satisfied with the response, they should contact the Head Teacher. If they remain dissatisfied, they should follow the school's complaints procedure, as detailed in the policy. Parents and carers have a responsibility to support the school's anti-bullying policy, actively encouraging their child to be a positive member of the school.

The role of pupils

Pupils are encouraged to tell anybody they trust if they are being bullied, and if the bullying continues, they must keep on letting people know. Pupils are invited to tell us their views about a range of school issues, including bullying, in the annual pupil questionnaire.

Monitoring and review

This policy is monitored by the Head Teacher, who reports to the Governing Body on request about the effectiveness of the policy. The bullying policy is the Governing Body's responsibility, and they review its effectiveness annually. They do this by examining the school's anti-bullying logbook, where incidents of bullying are recorded, and by discussion with the Head Teacher. They look out in particular for racist bullying, homophobic bullying, or bullying directed at children with disabilities or special educational needs.

This policy will be reviewed every two years, or earlier if necessary.