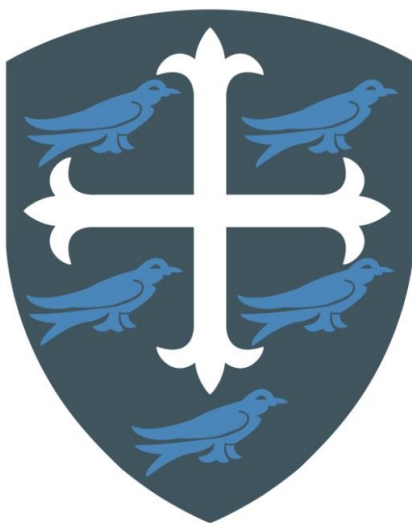


St Mary's Catholic Primary School



Anti-Bullying Policy 2023-2024

Legal Status:	Non-Statutory
Last Review:	September 2021
Review date:	January 2022
Next Review:	September 2023
Responsible Person:	Governing Body

Mission Statement

"The family of St Mary's strives to grow in God's love and care by learning together and valuing the uniqueness of each person."

Signed by Head of School:

At St Mary' School we are committed to providing a caring, friendly and safe environment for all our pupils so they can learn in a secure atmosphere.

Aims

In our Anti-Bullying Policy, we hope to promote the Christian aims of our Mission Statement through support and help for victims and bullies. We seek to encourage the help and support of parents/carers.

Our School policy aims in accordance with our Mission Statement to try to:

- to build on the School Behaviour Policy;
- prevent bullying;
- deal with bullying if it occurs.

We seek to achieve this through:

- raising awareness through the curriculum;
- behaviour and discipline policy
- online safety, including ICT policy
- giving pupils an opportunity to talk about bullying;
- encouraging the support and co-operation of parent/carers;
- supervision of key areas in the School;
- clear procedures for investigating incidents;
- guidelines for listening to witnesses, victims and bullies;
- training for teaching and non-teaching staff.

Links to Legislation

- There are several pieces of legislation which set out measures and actions for schools in response to bullying, as well as criminal and civil law. These may include (but are not limited to):
 - The Education and Inspection Act 2006, 2011
 - The Equality Act 2010
 - The Children Act 1989
 - Protection from Harassment Act 1997
 - The Malicious Communications Act 1988
 - Public Order Act 1986

Responsibilities

- It is the responsibility of:
 - The Head of School to communicate this policy to the school community, to ensure that disciplinary measures are applied fairly, consistently and reasonably, and that a member of the senior leadership team has been identified to take overall responsibility.
 - Governors to take a lead role in monitoring and reviewing this policy.
 - All staff, including governors, senior leadership, teaching and non-teaching staff, to support, uphold and implement this policy accordingly.
 - Parents/carers to support their children and work in partnership with the school.

What is bullying?

The Government defines bullying as 'behaviour by an individual or group, usually repeated over time that intentionally hurts another individual, or group, either physically or emotionally.' (DfE 'Preventing and Tackling Bullying')

Bullying includes: name calling, taunting, mocking, making offensive comments, kicking, hitting, pushing, taking belongings, inappropriate text messaging and emailing, sending offensive or degrading images by phone or electronic means, producing offensive graffiti, gossiping, excluding other children from groups, spreading hurtful and untruthful rumours. This is not an exclusive list.

The same unacceptable behaviours can be expressed online; this is sometimes called online bullying or cyberbullying. Specifically, this can include sending offensive, upsetting and inappropriate messages by phone, text, instant messenger, through gaming, websites, social media sites and apps, and sending offensive or degrading photos or videos.

Bullying is recognised by St Mary's RC Primary School as being a form of peer on peer abuse; children can abuse other children.

- Abuse is abuse and it should never be tolerated or passed off as "banter", "just having a laugh" or "part of growing up".
- We recognise that even if there are no reports of bullying, it does not mean it is not happening and it may be the case that it is just not being reported.
- All victims will be taken seriously and offered appropriate support, regardless of where the abuse takes place.

Bullying results in pain and distress to the victim. All types of bullying are in direct contravention of our Mission Statement and all we stand for at St Mary's and are therefore unacceptable and will not be tolerated. All pupils should feel able to tell and when bullying behaviour is brought to our attention, prompt and effective action will be taken. We are a TELLING school, therefore anyone who is aware of any type of bullying is expected to tell a member of staff immediately.

Forms and types of bullying covered in this policy:

Bullying can happen to anyone. This policy covers all types and forms of bullying including but not limited to:

- Bullying related to physical appearance
- Bullying of young carers, children in care or otherwise related to home circumstances
- Bullying related to physical/mental health conditions
- Physical bullying
- Emotional bullying
- Sexualised bullying/harassment
- Bullying via technology, known as online bullying or cyberbullying
- Prejudiced-based and discriminatory bullying (against people/pupils with protected characteristics) which may include:
 - Bullying related to race, religion, faith and belief and for those without faith
 - Bullying related to ethnicity, nationality or culture
 - Bullying related to Special Educational Needs or Disability (SEND)
 - Bullying related to sexual orientation (homophobic/biphobic bullying)
 - Gender based bullying, including transphobic bullying
 - Bullying against teenage parents (pregnancy and maternity under the Equality Act)

School Ethos

- Appropriate sanctions and support, for example as identified within the school behaviour policy and child protection policy, will be implemented in consultation with all parties concerned.
- If necessary, other agencies may be consulted or involved, for example the police if a criminal offence has been committed or Early Help if a child is felt to be at risk of significant harm.
- Where the bullying of or by pupils takes place off school site or outside of normal school hours (including cyberbullying), the school will ensure that the concern is fully investigated and responded to in line with this policy, our ICT policy and the school behaviour policy. If required, the DSL will collaborate with DSLs at other settings.

Guidance for teachers and support staff

1. Encourage knowledge of rules explained in the policy regarding acceptable behaviour.
2. Encourage positive resolution of difficulties within class.
3. Understand the importance of challenging inappropriate behaviours between peers.
4. Teachers and support staff to ensure that the playground and other areas are patrolled and supervised.

5. Welcome new children into the school and class and arrange for children to help.
6. Listen carefully and record reported incidents of bullying in the following way:
 - (a) In the class behaviour book, the incident of bullying will be dated, recorded and any action taken will be noted down.
 - (b) Serious incidents must be reported in writing to the Assistant Head of School and/or Head of School. The Head of School keeps a record of all reported incidents and the action taken.
7. Staff to make clear that the bullying behaviour is unacceptable.
8. Parent/carers to be informed if incidents are serious or frequent:
 - (a) If there is a serious incident the bully and the victim should record events in writing and the teacher will record discussions.
 - (b) Any witness accounts should be recorded and kept, along with any reflective work completed.

All staff should adopt a consistent approach and respond to parent/carers. A serious incident is one involving violence, racial harassment, name-calling of a vicious nature, threats of intimidation or threats that involve out of school behaviour.

Cyber Bullying

Cyberbullying can be defined as 'the use of Information and Communications Technology (ICT), particularly mobile phones and the internet, deliberately to upset someone else.' It can be an extension of face-to-face bullying, with technology providing the bully with another route to harass their target. However, it differs in several significant ways from other kinds of bullying: the invasion of home and personal space; the difficulty in controlling electronically circulated messages; the size of the audience; perceived anonymity; and even the profile of the person doing the bullying and their target.

Cyberbullying, like all bullying, will be taken very seriously. The school will record and monitor incidents of cyberbullying in the same way as all other forms of bullying. Where an individual can be identified, the school will ensure that appropriate sanctions are implemented to change the attitude and behaviour of the bully, as well as ensuring access to any additional help or support they may need.

When responding to cyberbullying concerns, the school will:

- o Act as soon as an incident has been reported or identified.
- o Provide appropriate support for the person who has been cyberbullied, and work with the person who has carried out the bullying to ensure that it does not happen again.
- o Encourage the person being bullied to keep any evidence (screenshots) of the bullying activity to assist any investigation.
- o Take all available steps where possible to identify the person responsible. This may include:
 - looking at use of the school systems
 - identifying and interviewing possible witnesses
 - Contacting the service provider and the police, if necessary.
- o Work with the individuals and online service providers to prevent the incident from spreading and assist in removing offensive or upsetting material from circulation. This may include:
 - Support reports to a service provider to remove content if those involved are unable to be identified or if those involved refuse to or are unable to delete content.
 - Confiscating and searching pupils' electronic devices, such as mobile phones, in accordance with the law and the school searching and confiscation policy. (We will access the DfE 'Searching, screening and confiscation at school' and Childnet cyberbullying guidance to ensure that the school's powers are used proportionately and lawfully).
 - Requesting the deletion of locally-held content and content posted online if they contravene school behavioural policies.
- o Where an individual can be identified, the school will ensure that appropriate sanctions

are implemented to change the attitude and behaviour of the bully, as well as ensuring access to any additional help or support they may need.

- o Inform the police if a criminal offence has been committed.
- o Provide information to staff and pupils regarding steps they can take to protect themselves online. This may include:
 - advising those targeted not to retaliate or reply.
 - providing advice on blocking or removing people from contact lists.
 - helping those involved to consider and manage any private information they may have in the public domain.

Supporting Pupils

- Pupils who have been bullied will be supported by:
 - o Reassuring the pupil and providing immediate pastoral support.
 - o Offering an immediate opportunity to discuss the experience with their teacher, the DSL, or a member of staff of their choice.
 - o Being advised to keep a record of the bullying as evidence and discuss how to respond to any further concerns.
 - o Working towards restoring self-esteem and confidence.
 - o Providing ongoing support. This may include working and speaking with staff, offering formal counselling, engaging with parents and carers.
 - o Where necessary, working with the wider community and local/national organisations to provide further or specialist advice and guidance;
- Pupils who have perpetrated bullying will be helped by:
 - o Discussing what happened, establishing the concern and the need to change.
 - o Informing parents/carers to help change the attitude and behaviour of the child.
 - o Providing appropriate education and support regarding their behaviour or actions.
 - o If online, requesting that content be removed and reporting accounts/content to service provider.
 - o Sanctioning, in line with school behaviour/discipline policy. This may include:
 - official warnings
 - detentions/internal exclusions
 - removal of privileges (including online access when encountering cyberbullying concerns)
 - in extreme or repeated cases, fixed-term or permanent exclusions.
 - o Where necessary, working with the wider community and local/national organisations to provide further or specialist advice and guidance

Supporting Adults

- Our school takes measures to prevent and tackle bullying among pupils; however, it is equally important to recognise that bullying of adults, including staff and parents, whether by pupils, parents or other staff members, is unacceptable.
- Adults who have been bullied or affected will be supported by:
 - o Offering an immediate opportunity to discuss the concern with the designated safeguarding lead, a senior member of staff and/or the Head of School.
 - o Advising them to keep a record of the bullying as evidence and discuss how to respond to future concerns.
 - o Where the bullying takes place off school site or outside of normal school hours (including online), the school will still investigate the concern and ensure that appropriate action is taken in accordance with the schools' behaviour and discipline policy.
 - o Reporting offensive or upsetting content and/or accounts to the service provider, where the bullying has occurred online.

- o Reassuring and offering appropriate support.
- o Working with the wider community and local/national organisations to provide further or specialist advice and guidance.
- Adults who have perpetrated the bullying will be helped by:
 - o Discussing what happened with a senior member of staff and/or the Head of School to establish the concern.
 - o Establishing whether a legitimate grievance or concern has been raised and signposting to the school's official complaints procedures.
 - o If online, requesting that content be removed.
 - o Instigating disciplinary, civil or legal action as appropriate or required.

Preventing Bullying

Environment

- The whole school community will:
 - o Create and support an inclusive environment which promotes a culture of mutual respect, consideration and care for others, which will be upheld by all.
 - o Recognise that bullying can be perpetrated or experienced by any member of the community, including adults and children (child on child abuse).
 - o Recognise the potential for children with Special Educational Needs and Disabilities (SEND) to be disproportionately impacted by bullying and will implement additional pastoral support as required.
 - o Recognise that bullying may be affected and influenced by gender, age, ability and culture of those involved.
 - o Openly discuss differences between people that could motivate bullying, such as: children with different family situations, such as looked after children or those with caring responsibilities, religion, ethnicity, disability, gender, sexuality or appearance related difference.
 - o Challenge practice and language (including 'banter') which does not uphold the school values of tolerance, non-discrimination and respect towards others.
 - o Be encouraged to use technology, especially mobile phones and social media, positively and responsibly.
 - o Work with staff, the wider community and outside agencies to prevent and tackle concerns including all forms of prejudice-based and discriminatory bullying.
 - o Actively create "safe spaces" for vulnerable children and young people.
 - o Celebrate success and achievements to promote and build a positive school ethos.

Policy and Support

- The whole school community will:
 - o Provide a range of approaches for pupils, staff and parents/carers to access support and report concerns.
 - o Regularly update and evaluate our practice to consider the developments of technology and provide up-to-date advice and education to all members of the community regarding positive online behaviour.
 - o Take appropriate, proportionate and reasonable action, in line with existing school policies, for any bullying brought to the schools' attention, which involves or affects pupils, even when they are not on school premises; for example, when using school transport or online, etc.
 - o Implement appropriate disciplinary sanctions; the consequences of bullying will reflect the seriousness of the incident, so that others see that bullying is unacceptable.
 - o Use a variety of techniques to resolve the issues between those who bully, and those who have been bullied.

Education and Training

- The school community will:
 - o Train all staff, including teaching staff, support staff (e.g. administration staff, lunchtime support staff and site support staff) and pastoral staff, to identify all forms of bullying and take appropriate action, following the school's policy and procedures, including recording and reporting incidents.
 - o Consider a range of opportunities and approaches for addressing bullying throughout the curriculum and other activities, such as: through displays, assemblies, peer support, the school/student council, etc.
 - o Collaborate with other local educational settings as appropriate, and during key times of the year, for example during transition.
 - o Ensure anti-bullying has a high profile throughout the year, reinforced through key opportunities such as anti-bullying week
 - o Provide systematic opportunities to develop pupils' social and emotional skills, including building self-esteem.

Involvement of Pupils

- We will:
 - o Involve pupils in policy writing and decision making, to ensure that they understand the school's approach and are clear about the part they play in preventing bullying.
 - o Regularly canvas pupils' views on the extent and nature of bullying.
 - o Ensure that all pupils know how to express worries and anxieties about bullying.
 - o Ensure that all pupils are aware of the range of sanctions which may be applied against those engaging in bullying.
 - o Involve pupils in anti-bullying campaigns in schools and embedded messages in the wider school curriculum.
 - o Utilise pupil voice in providing pupil led education and support
 - o Publicise the details of internal support, as well as external helplines and websites.
 - o Offer support to pupils who have been bullied and to those who are bullying to address the problems they have.

Guidance for pupils

When someone or yourself is being bullied, take action immediately by telling a member of staff (teacher or another adult), or a friend:

1. Do not tolerate bullies in your group. Speak out against bullies. Show you disapprove of that behaviour.
2. Do not smile or laugh if someone is being bullied, tell a teacher or another adult.
3. Involve children in your games; do not leave children out of your play.
4. Always remember to keep the rules in the Positive Behaviour Policy.
5. Be kind to others.

Procedures

- If after saying, "Stop, I don't like it" to a bully, s/he does not stop, the child being bullied [victim] tells an adult. The adult speaks to the child[ren] involved and makes them aware of their actions. The incident is reported back to the class teacher.
- Bullying will be dealt with under the Positive Behaviour Policy. Strategies for dealing with bullying may include (but not be limited to), being referred to the Head of School or assistant Head of School, involvement of the parents (both victim and bully), the involvement of outside agencies, the child being required to go home at lunchtime or a being given a fixed term exclusion. Each incident of bullying will be dealt with at the discretion of the teacher/ Assistant Head/ Head (whoever is appropriate) considering all the circumstances of the particular incident.
- Bullying behaviour, and the action taken, will be recorded centrally to monitor any repeat incidents of type, individual or cohort.

Involvement and Liaison with Parents and Carers

- We will:
 - o Take steps to involve parents and carers in develop policies and procedures, to ensure they are aware that the school does not tolerate any form of bullying.
 - o Make sure that key information about prejudice-based and discriminatory bullying (including policies and named points of contact) is available to parents/carers in a variety of formats, including via the school website.
 - o Ensure all parents/carers know who to contact if they are worried about bullying and where to access independent advice.
 - o Work with all parents/carers and the local community to address issues beyond the school gates that give rise to bullying.
 - o Ensure that parents work with the school to role model positive behaviour for pupils, both on and offline.

Guidance for parent/carers

Remember you are the first educators of your children. Help in the following ways:

1. Ensure that your child knows what behaviour and language is unacceptable. Make sure they know the School rules.
2. Take an interest in your child's social life
3. Tell the School if you think your child is being bullied, or is bullying others.
4. Do not encourage your child to hit back but encourage them to tell their teacher and to stay with their friends as much as possible.
5. Work with the teachers to devise strategies to support your child in and out of School.
6. If your child is involved in bullying, help by seeking advice and guidance from professionals. Contact your child's class teacher, who will inform the Assistant Head of School, enabling us all to work together to resolve the problem as soon as possible.

If a child is frequently involved in bullying, we expect parent/carers to respond positively in preventing this. Should no improvement take place, the child will risk exclusion.

Monitoring and Review: Putting Policy into Practice

- The school will ensure that they regularly monitor and evaluate mechanisms to ensure that the policy is being consistently applied.
- Any issues identified will be incorporated into the school's action planning.
- The Head of School will be informed of bullying concerns, as appropriate.
- The named Governor for bullying will report on a regular basis to the governing body on incidents of bullying, including outcomes.

Signs and symptoms

A child may indicate by signs of behaviour that he or she is being bullied. Adults should be aware of these possible signs and that they should investigate if a child:

- Is frightened of walking to or from school
- Doesn't want to go on the school/public bus
- Begs to be driven to school
- Changes their usual routine
- Is unwilling to go to school (school phobic)
- Begins to truant
- Becomes withdrawn, anxious or lacking in confidence
- Starts stammering
- Attempts or threatens suicide or runs away

- Cries themselves to sleep at night or has nightmares
- Feels ill in the morning
- Begins to do poorly in school work
- Comes home with clothes torn or books damaged
- Has possessions which are damaged or go "missing"
- Asks for money and starts stealing money (to pay bully)
- Has dinner or other monies continually "lost"
- Has unexplained cuts or bruises
- Comes home starving (money/lunch has been stolen)
- Becomes aggressive, disruptive or unreasonable
- Is bullying other children or siblings
- Stops eating
- Is frightened to say what is wrong
- Gives improbable excuses if any of the above
- Is afraid to use the internet or mobile phone
- Is nervous and jumpy when a cyber message is received.

These signs and behaviours could indicate other problems, but bullying should be considered a possibility and should be investigated.

These incidents are NOT considered bullying:

Not liking someone — it is very natural that people do not like everyone around them and, as unpleasant as it may be to know someone does not like you, verbal and non-verbal messages of "I don't like you" are not acts of bullying unless they are constant and ongoing.

Being excluded —it is very natural for people to gather around a group of friends and we cannot be friends with everyone, so it is acceptable that when pupils have a party or play a game at the playground, they will include their friends and exclude others. It is very important to remind children they might do the same thing sometimes too and, although exclusion is unpleasant, it is not an act of bullying.

Accidentally bumping into someone — when people bump into others, the reaction depends mostly on the bumped person's disposition. If they have had a bad day, they think it was an act of aggressive behaviour, but if they are in the good mood, they smile back and attract an apology. This is also relevant for playing sport, for example, when children are throwing the ball at each other and accidentally hit someone on the head. It is very important for teachers and parents to explain that some accidents occur without malice.

Making other children play things a certain way —wanting things to be done our way is normal and is not an act of bullying. To make sure children do not fall into considering it as an aggressive or "bossy" behaviour, we need to teach them assertiveness.

A single act of telling a joke about someone — making fun of other people is not fun for them, but the difference between having a sense of humour and making fun of someone is very fine. It is important to teach children that things they say as jokes should also be amusing for the others. If not, they should stop. Unless it happens over and over again and done deliberately to hurt someone, telling jokes about people is not bullying.

Arguments — Arguments are just heated disagreements between two (or more) people (or groups). It is natural that people have different interests and disagree on many things. The argument itself is NOT a form of bullying, although some people turn arguments into bullying, because they want to win the argument so much. They use every means to get what they want and find a weakness in the other person, abuse knowledge or trust they have gained and use it against the other person. It is very important to distinguish between natural disagreements and bullying during an argument.

Expression of unpleasant thoughts or feelings regarding others — communication requires at least two people. Although it may be unpleasant to hear what someone thinks about you, it is NOT a form of

bullying but a very natural thing. In every communication, there are disagreements and some form of judgment about each other's attitude and behaviour. If someone says to you, "I think this was not a nice gesture" or "You insulted me when you said this," this is NOT bullying but an expression of thoughts and feelings.

Isolated acts of harassment, aggressive behaviour, intimidation, or meanness — the definition of bullying states that there is repetition in the behaviour. Bullying is a conscious, repeated, hostile, aggressive behaviour of an individual or a group abusing their position with the intention to harm others or gain real or perceived power. Therefore, anything that happens once is NOT an act of bullying.

Useful Links and Supporting Organisations

The following links may provide additional support to children, staff or families.

- Anti-Bullying Alliance: www.anti-bullyingalliance.org.uk
- Childline: www.childline.org.uk
- Family Lives: www.familylives.org.uk
- Kidscape: www.kidscape.org.uk
- MindEd: www.minded.org.uk
- NSPCC: www.nspcc.org.uk
- PSHE Association: www.pshe-association.org.uk
- Restorative Justice Council: www.restorativejustice.org.uk
- The Diana Award: www.diana-award.org.uk
- Victim Support: www.victimsupport.org.uk
- Young Minds: www.youngminds.org.uk
- Young Carers: www.youngcarers.net

Cyberbullying

- Childnet: www.childnet.com
- Internet Watch Foundation: www.iwf.org.uk
- Report Harmful Content: <https://reportharmfulcontent.com/>
- UK Safer Internet Centre: www.saferinternet.org.uk
- The UK Council for Internet Safety (UKCIS): www.gov.uk/government/organisations/ukcouncil-for-internet-safety
- DfE 'Cyberbullying: advice for Head of Schools and school staff': www.gov.uk/government/publications/preventing-and-tackling-bullying
- DfE 'Advice for parents and carers on cyberbullying': www.gov.uk/government/publications/preventing-and-tackling-bullying

SEND

- Changing Faces: www.changingfaces.org.uk
- Mencap: www.mencap.org.uk
- Anti-Bullying Alliance Cyberbullying and children and young people with SEN and disabilities: www.anti-bullyingalliance.org.uk/tools-information/all-about-bullying/atrisk-groups/sen-disability