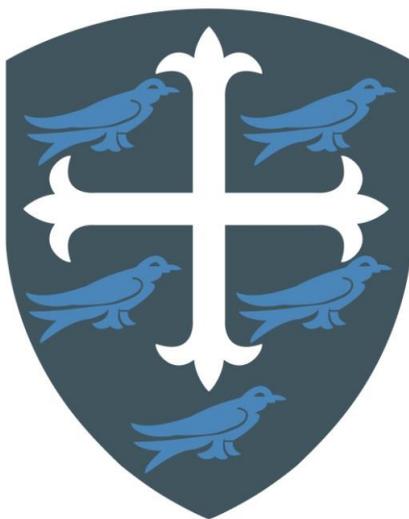


# St Mary's Catholic Primary School



## Anti-Bullying Policy 2019 - 2021

<b>Legal Status:</b>	Statutory
<b>Last Review:</b>	September 2017
<b>Review date:</b>	September 2019
<b>Next Review:</b>	September 2021
<b>Responsible Person:</b>	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."

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;
- 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.

## **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.'

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.

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.

## **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. Teachers and support staff to ensure that the playground and other areas are patrolled and supervised.
4. Welcome new children into the school and class and arrange for children to help.
5. 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 Headteacher and/or Headteacher. The Headteacher keeps a record of all reported incidents and the action taken.
6. Staff to make clear that the bullying behaviour is unacceptable.
7. 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.

### **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 headteacher or assistant headteacher, 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) taking into account 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.

### **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.

### **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 Headteacher, 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.

## **SUPPORTING PUPILS**

**Bullied Pupils:** Staff who deal with pupils who have been bullied must always offer reassurance. Pupils who have been bullied will be given support.

**Bullies:** It is recognised that support must also be given to the perpetrator. Changing the attitude and behaviour of bullies will be part of the responsibility of the positive procedures used by the school. However, the school recognises that sanctions will also have to be used against bullies.

All the children concerned should be fully involved in the discussions leading up to the solution and should not be left feeling isolated. Honest group discussions that involve both the bullied child and the bully with other children of their choice attending and encouraged to participate, help the children to resolve the matter themselves with support and vigilance from the staff and is the most effective way. Parents will need to be kept fully informed.

### **Restorative justice**

Restorative Justice is the process that is used to assist bullies in understanding the effect they've had on their victims. If appropriate, the victim is given an opportunity to meet with the bully face to face in a safe and supervised setting and talk through the impact that the bullying has had, or is having, on them. Peer mediation and circle time are often part of this process. Restorative justice is designed to empower the victims and to help the perpetrators understand the human consequences of their behaviour.

### **Sanctions**

The following sanctions may be used by staff:

1. Detentions at break.
2. Withdrawal of privileges or attendance on outings etc
3. Lunchtime exclusion
4. Community service, e.g. tidying playground, doing jobs
5. Exclusion

### **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.

## Resources

DfE Guidelines  
Sheffield Project Guidelines and Video  
Action Against Bullying – Scottish Office  
Bullying – Child Line  
Bullying – Cardiff Institute  
You Can Beat Bullying – Kidscape  
You, Me and Us – Home Office  
Feeling Good – N Wetton  
That's Not Fair – B & T Miller  
The Elton Report  
Managing Discipline in Schools – S Delsol  
Concern for Others – D Dixon

## Useful websites:

[www.kidscape.org.uk](http://www.kidscape.org.uk)  
[www.antibullying.net](http://www.antibullying.net)  
[www.anti-bullyingalliance.org](http://www.anti-bullyingalliance.org)  
[www.bullying.co.uk](http://www.bullying.co.uk)  
[www.beatbullying.org](http://www.beatbullying.org)  
[www.childline.org.uk](http://www.childline.org.uk)