



St Mary's RC Primary School

Anti-Bullying Policy

Statement of principles

The Governing Body and staff of St Mary's RC Primary School believe that in order to enable effective teaching and learning to take place, good behaviour in all aspects of school life is necessary. We seek to create a caring and safe learning environment, which reflects our Roman Catholic Christian ethos and the core values and aims of our school.

It is our intention that our children are happy learners, who are taught about and are able to demonstrate, the Christian values of love, trust, kindness, respect, peace and friendship in their day to day lives. To enable this to happen, we believe that all members of the school community; children, parents, governors and all staff should:

- Have high expectations for their own and others' behaviour;
- Make a positive contribution and recognise that of others;
- Have excellent communication skills - be listened to and listen to others;
- Show respect and support for one another, demonstrating a responsibility for others;
- Treat all in a fair, consistent and calm way and expect the relationship between parents, staff and children to be one of trust and consistency.

Bullying of any kind (including peer on peer abuse and online bullying) is unacceptable and will not be tolerated in our school. We take all incidents of bullying seriously and understand the effect it can have on victims and perpetrators. No-one deserves to be a victim of bullying. Everybody has the right to be treated with respect and pupils who are bullying others need to learn different ways of behaving.

At St Mary's RC Primary School, we acknowledge that bullying does happen from time to time – indeed, it would unrealistic to claim that it does not. When bullying does occur, everyone should be able to tell and know that incidents will be dealt with promptly and effectively in accordance with our anti-bullying policy. We are a *VOCAL* school. This means that *anyone* who knows that bullying is happening is expected to inform the staff.

Aims and Objectives of this Policy

The aim of this policy is to try and prevent and deal with any behaviour deemed as bullying. The implementation of this policy will create an ethos where bullying is regarded as unacceptable so that a safe and secure environment is created for everyone to learn and work in. All members of the school have a responsibility to recognise bullying when it occurs and take appropriate action in accordance with the school policy. This will happen in the following ways:

- The school will meet the legal requirement for all schools to have an anti-bullying policy in place.
- The school will work closely with other professional agencies to ensure that children stay safe as stated in The Children Act 1989, The SEN and Disability Act 2001, The Government Green Paper 'Every Child Matters' 2003 (outcome 2) and The Children Act 2004.
- All governors, teaching and non-teaching staff, pupils and parents/guardians will have an understanding of what bullying is.
- All governors, teaching and non-teaching staff will know what the school policy is on bullying and will consistently and swiftly follow it when bullying is reported.
- All pupils and parents/guardians will know what the school policy is on bullying and what they can do if bullying occurs.
- Pupils and parents/carers will be assured that they will be supported when bullying is reported.
- Whole school initiatives (staff training, celebration assemblies etc.) and proactive teaching strategies (PSHE [Personal, Social & Health Education] lessons, circle time etc.) will be used throughout the school to reduce the opportunities for bullying to occur.
- A positive, caring ethos will be created within the school environment where everyone can work, play and express themselves, free from the fear of being bullied.

What is Bullying?

St Mary's RC Primary School has adopted the following definition of bullying which is our shared understanding of what bullying is:

Bullying is any deliberate, hurtful, upsetting, frightening or threatening behaviour by an individual or a group towards other people. It is repeated over a period of time and it is very difficult for the victims to defend themselves (remember STOP – it happens Several Times On Purpose). Bullying is unkind and cruel and it results in worry, fear, pain and distress to the victim/s.

Bullying can be:

- Emotional: being unfriendly, excluding, tormenting (e.g. hiding books, threatening gestures), ridicule, humiliation, whispering.
- Verbal: name-calling, sarcasm, spreading rumours, threats, teasing, making rude remarks, making fun of someone – this is not something to be dismissed as joking or banter
- Physical: pushing, kicking, hitting, pinching, throwing stones, biting, spitting, using weapons, punching or any other forms of violence, taking or hiding someone's things
- Racist: racial taunts, graffiti, gestures, making fun of culture and religion
- Sexual: unwanted physical contact or sexually abusive or sexist comments
- Homophobic: because of/or focussing on the issue of sexuality
- Online/cyber setting up 'hate websites', sending offensive text messages, emails and abusing the victims via their mobile phones
- Any unfavourable or negative comments, gestures or actions made to someone relating to their disability or special educational needs.

What isn't Bullying?

It is important to understand that bullying is not the *odd occasion* of falling out with friends, name calling, arguments or when the occasional trick or joke is played on someone. It is bullying if it is done several times on purpose (**STOP**). Children sometimes fall out or say things because they are upset. When occasional problems of this kind arise it is not classed as bullying. It is an important part of children's development to learn how to deal with friendship breakdowns, the odd name calling or childish prank. We all have to learn how to deal with these situations and develop social skills to repair relationships. Our ELSA Teaching Assistant will work with children to address these points and resolve the matter to the satisfaction of all concerned.

Where does bullying happen?

It can happen anywhere – in the classroom, in the corridor, in the toilets, in the dining hall, in the playground etc. Bullying may also happen on the way to and from school. In such cases, the Headteacher is empowered by law to deal with such incidents but must do so in accordance with the school's policy. (See also Behaviour Policy). At St Mary's RC Primary School, we are concerned with our children's conduct and welfare outside as well as inside school and we will do what we can to address any bullying issues that occur off the school premises. The following steps may be taken:

- Talk to the local Community Police Officer about problems on the streets
- Talk to the Headteachers of other schools whose children may be involved in bullying off the premises
- Discuss coping strategies with parents
- Talk to the children about how to handle or avoid bullying outside the school premises.

Signs and Symptoms

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

- is frightened of walking to or from school
- begs to be driven to school
- changes their usual routine/route to school
- begins truanting
- becomes withdrawn, anxious or lacking in confidence

- starts stammering
- attempts/threatens suicide or runs away
- cries themselves to sleep at night or has nightmares
- feels ill in the morning
- begins to underperform in school work
- comes home with clothes torn or books damaged
- has possessions go "missing"
- asks for money or starts stealing money e.g. (to pay the bully)
- has dinner or other monies continually "lost"
- has unexplained cuts or bruises
- comes home starving (money/snack/sandwiches have been stolen)
- becomes aggressive, disruptive or unreasonable
- starts swearing or using aggressive language for no apparent reason
- is bullying other children or siblings
- stops eating
- is frightened to say what's wrong
- gives improbable excuses for any of the above.

These signs and behaviours could indicate other problems, but bullying should be considered a possibility and should be taken seriously and investigated as soon as possible.

Bullying of children with Special Educational Needs

St Mary's RC Primary School is an inclusive school. We provide a secure, accepting, safe and stimulating environment where everyone is valued for who they are. Everyone involved in the school is very aware that children with Special Educational Needs can be especially vulnerable to bullying and we are therefore particularly vigilant at all times.

High attaining, gifted or talented pupils can also be affected by bullying. Staff will treat this type of bullying as seriously and in the same way as any other type of bullying.

Procedures for reporting and responding to bullying incidents

All staff will respond calmly and consistently to all allegations and incidents of bullying at St Mary's RC Primary School. They will be taken seriously by all staff and dealt with impartially and promptly. All those involved will have the opportunity to be heard. Staff will protect and support all children involved whilst allegations and incidents are investigated and resolved. The following step-by-step procedure will be used for reporting and responding to bullying allegations or incidents:

1. Report all bullying allegations and incidents to staff.
2. Staff will make sure the victim(s) is and feels safe.
3. Appropriate advice will be given to help the victim(s).
4. Staff will listen and speak to all children involved about the incident separately.
5. The problem will be identified and possible solutions suggested.
6. Staff will attempt to adopt a problem solving approach which will move children on from them having to justify their behaviour.
7. Appropriate action will be taken quickly to end the bullying behaviour or threats of bullying.
8. Staff will reinforce to the bully that their behaviour is unacceptable.
9. The bully (bullies) may be asked to apologise. Other consequences may take place and appropriate sanctions applied (see next section).
10. If possible, the pupils will be reconciled.
11. An attempt will be made, and support given, to help the bully (bullies) understand and change his/her/their behaviour.
12. In cases of serious bullying, the incidents and follow-up actions will be recorded by staff on CPOMs.
13. In serious cases parents will be informed and will be invited to come into school for a meeting to discuss the problem.
14. After the incident has been investigated and dealt with, each case will be monitored to ensure repeated bullying does not take place.

15. Bullying incidents will be discussed regularly at staff meetings and reported at Governor Meetings.

17. If necessary and appropriate, Children's Social Care or Police will be consulted.

The following sanctions may be used:

- Apologise to the victim(s) verbally or in writing
- Lose privileges
- Lose playtimes
- Spend playtimes and lunchtimes with an adult
- Parents will be invited into school
- Go on a behaviour plan
- Be removed from class and work in a different area of school
- Report to the Headteacher
- Fixed term exclusion
- Permanent exclusion

Strategies for the prevention and reduction of bullying

Whole school initiatives and proactive teaching strategies will be used throughout the school to develop a positive learning environment with the aim of reducing the opportunities for bullying to occur. These can include:

- Monitor the extent of bullying in the school and the effectiveness of the anti-bullying policy
- Each class agreeing on their own set of class rules
- Awareness raising through regular anti-bullying assemblies
- PSHE scheme of work (Jigsaw) from Reception to Year 6 used to support this policy
- Setting up of a circle of friends support network where a small group of children volunteer to help and support an individual experiencing difficulties
- Children being read stories about bullying
- Using drama activities and role-plays to help children be more assertive and teach them strategies to help them deal with bullying situations
- Prominently displaying Anti-Bullying Code and anti-bullying posters – commercial and produced by the children around the school
- Introducing playground improvements and initiatives
- Using praise and rewards to reinforce good behaviour
- Encouraging the whole school community to model appropriate behaviour towards one another
- Organising regular anti-bullying training for all staff.

Monitoring and evaluation of the policy

To ensure this policy is effective, it will be regularly monitored and evaluated.

Following an annual review any amendments will be made to the policy and everyone informed. An annual report will then be issued to governors and parents and the policy will be distributed to all parents.

Signature from Governors:

[Handwritten signature]

Date: 12/05/22

Signature of Head teacher:

Claire Halstead

Date: 12/05/22

Date of next review: May 2023

Policy date – May 2022



All are welcome here to walk with Jesus as we love, learn and flourish.