

Anti Bullying Policy

St Mary's C of E Primary School



‘Learning to live life in all its fullness’

John 10.10

Approved by:	The Governing Board	Date: Autumn 2024
Last reviewed on:	09.09.2024	
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Vision

Our St Mary's CE Primary School vision is for everyone to feel a sense of belonging to a special family where shared values are at the heart of all we do. We believe in the power of enthusiasm and self-confidence and seek to provide a secure, caring, Christian community where everyone can learn their own self-worth in an atmosphere of tolerance, mutual respect and cooperation.

We encourage children to become resilient, independent learners who are able to contribute positively to the school community in which they live so they can take their full place in society secure as individuals, whilst able to respect the needs and values of others.

School Statement on bullying

"When God created humankind, He made them in the likeness of God." Genesis 5:1. We believe that all people are made in the image of God and unconditionally loved by God. Everyone is equal and we treat each other with dignity and respect. Our school is a place where everyone should be able to flourish in a loving and hospitable community.

St Mary's CE Primary School is committed to providing a supportive, caring and safe environment in which all children are free from the fear of being bullied. As a school, we take bullying and its impact seriously. Bullying of any form is not tolerated in our school, whether carried out by a child or an adult.

Aims and purpose of the policy

- To ensure a secure and happy environment free from threat, harassment discrimination or any type of bullying behaviour.
- To create an environment where all are treated with dignity and respect and where all members of the school community understand that bullying is not acceptable.
- To ensure a consistent approach to preventing, challenging and responding to incidents of bullying that occur.
- To inform pupils and parents of the school's expectations and to foster a productive partnership which helps to maintain a bullying-free environment.
- To outline our commitment to continuously improving our approach to tackling bullying by regularly monitoring and reviewing the impact of our preventative measures.

This policy adheres to the principles under data protection law. For further information, please review the school's data protection policy published on the school's website.

Responsibilities

It is the responsibility of the Headteacher to communicate this policy to the school community and to ensure that the measures in this policy are applied fairly, consistently and reasonably. All staff, including governors, volunteers, teaching and non-teaching staff are responsible for upholding and implementing this policy accordingly.

Parents and carers are asked to abide by this policy, supporting their children and working in partnership with the school to prevent and tackle bullying.

Pupils are expected to understand what bullying is and be upstanders for the school community, following our school vision for anti-bullying as detailed in this policy.

What is Bullying?

We recognise that many children will experience conflict in their relationships with other children and as a school we are committed to developing empathy and the skills to manage relationships in a peaceful way that does not harm others.

At St Mary's CE Primary School, our definition of bullying is:

Repeated negative behaviour that is intended to make others feel upset, uncomfortable or unsafe.

The above definition is a pupil-centred definition. Adults within the school community, including staff, governors and parents/carers must remember that:

- **Bullying can be carried out by an individual or a group of people towards another individual or group.**
- **Where bullying takes place there will be an imbalance of power and the bully or bullies will hold more power than those being bullied.**
- **It can take place face to face or online.**

Bullying is recognised by the school as being a form of peer on peer abuse. It can be emotionally abusive and can cause adverse effects on children's emotional development. If bullying is allowed, it harms the perpetrator, the target and the whole school community and it's secure and happy environment.

National research has shown that some groups of pupils are particularly vulnerable to bullying. These include pupils with SEND, children looked after by the local authority, pupils from minority ethnic groups or faiths, young carers, LGBTQ pupils and those perceived to be LGBTQ.

In school, we teach children that bullying can take the form of:

- Physical (e.g. hitting, kicking, pushing or inappropriate/unwanted physical contact)
- Verbal (e.g. name calling, ridicule, comments)
- Indirect (e.g. excluding someone, spreading rumours)
- Cyber (e.g. messaging, social media, email)

We understand that the nature of bullying can also be:

- Visual/written (e.g. graffiti, gestures, wearing racist insignia)
- Damage to personal property
- Threat with a weapon
- Theft or extortion
- Persistent bullying

Bullying can be based on any of the following things:

- Race (racist bullying)
- Special educational needs (SEN) or disability
- Culture or class
- Gender (sexist bullying)
- Homophobic or biphobic (bullying because of sexuality or perceived sexuality)
- Transphobic (bullying because of gender identify or perceived gender identity)
- Appearance or health conditions
- Religion or belief
- Related to home or other personal circumstances
- Related to another vulnerable group of people.

Cyber-Bullying

The rapid development of and widespread access to, technology has provided a new medium for 'virtual' bullying, which can occur in or outside school. Cyber-bullying is a form of bullying which can happen twenty-four hours a day with a potentially wider audience and greater accessibility as people forward on content at a click. Cyber-bullying is dealt with in the same way as other types of bullying at St Mary's CE Primary School. Children are taught that cyber-bullying is not acceptable and that everyone has a responsibility to report incidents of bullying.

Derogatory language

Derogatory or offensive language is not acceptable and will not be tolerated. This type of language can take any of the forms of bullying listed in our definition of bullying. It will be challenged by staff and recorded and monitored on CPOMS and behaviour incidents and follow up actions and sanctions, if appropriate, will be taken for pupils and staff found using any such language. Staff are also encouraged to record the casual use of derogatory language using CPOMS.

Prejudice based incidents

A prejudice-based incident is a one-off incident of unkind or hurtful behaviour that is motivated by a prejudice or negative attitudes, beliefs or views towards a protected characteristic or minority group. It can be targeted towards an individual or group of people and have a significant impact on those targeted. All prejudice-based incidents are taken seriously and recorded and monitored in school, with the Headteacher regularly reporting incidents to the governing body. This not only ensures that all incidents are dealt with accordingly, but also helps to prevent bullying as it enables targeted anti-bullying interventions.

School strategies to prevent and tackle bullying

At St Mary's CE Primary School, we foster a clear understanding that bullying, in any form, is unacceptable. We believe that preventing bullying is the responsibility of our whole school community and where there are incidents of bullying we will work together to resolve the situation and to learn from what has happened.

We use a range of measures to prevent and tackle bullying including:

- Our school vision is at the heart of everything we do and ensures that all members of the school community are revered and respected as members of a community where all are known and loved by God.
- Information about anti-bullying is highly visible around school including our centrally located on corridor display boards for pupils.
- We use pupil-friendly 'anti-bullying' posters to ensure that all pupils understand the policy and know how to report bullying.

- The curriculum includes opportunities for pupils to understand that bullying is wrong, learn about different types of bullying and what they can do to respond to and prevent bullying. It also includes opportunities for pupils to learn to value themselves, value others and appreciate and respect difference.
- Collective worship explores the importance of inclusivity, dignity and respect as well as other themes that play a part in challenging bullying.
- Through a variety of planned activities and time across the curriculum, pupils are given the opportunity to gain self-confidence and develop strategies to speak up for themselves and express their own thoughts and opinions.
- Regular opportunities are provided to discuss issues that may arise in class and for teachers to target specific interventions.
- Stereotypes are challenged by staff and pupils across the school.
- Our school's Senior Mental Health Lead provides support for both pupils and parents to help prevent and tackle bullying
- Our behaviour policy provides support through justice and restoration to target bullying and those who show bullying behaviour
- Pupils are continually involved in developing school-wide anti-bullying initiatives
- On a regular basis, pupils have the opportunity to feedback to staff on how safe and happy they feel at school
- Contact details for NSPCC Childline are highly visible in communal areas of the school building
- Working with parents and carers, and in partnership with community organisations, where necessary.

Signs and Symptoms

A child's behaviour may indicate that he or she is being bullied. All school staff should be aware of these possible signs and should take action if a child:

- Is frightened of walking to and from school
- Is unwilling to go out at break or lunch time
- Is unhappy about coming to school
- Demonstrates changes to their usual routine
- Becomes withdrawn, anxious, or lacking in confidence
- Begins to underperform at school
- Has possessions 'go missing'
- Has dinner or other monies constantly 'lost'
- Has unexplained cuts and bruises
- Becomes aggressive, disruptive or unreasonable
- Is bullying other children or siblings
- Is frightened to talk about their concerns
- Is afraid to use the internet or mobile phone
- Gives improbable excuses for any of the above

Research undertaken by the DfE indicates that children are more likely to tell a family member that they are being bullied than tell their teacher. At St Mary's CE Primary School, we encourage parents and carers to report incidents of bullying immediately so that appropriate action can be taken. Parents may also report that their child:

- Does not sleep well at night
- Feels ill in the morning
- Comes home with clothes torn or possessions damaged
- Asks for money or starts stealing money
- Stops eating

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

Reporting bullying (roles and responsibilities) Senior Staff

The headteacher have overall responsibility for ensuring that the anti-bullying policy is followed by all members of staff and that the school upholds its duty to promote the safety and wellbeing of all young people.

Staff

All staff and volunteers in school have a duty to challenge bullying (including homophobic, biphobic and transphobic bullying). All staff must act to stop bullying and play an active role in the school's efforts to prevent bullying.

Parents/carers

Parents and carers also have a responsibility to look out for signs of bullying (e.g. distress, feigning illness, lack of concentration). Parents and carers should support their child to report the bullying. This can be done by talking with the class teacher or phase team leader at the end of the school day, or by making an appointment to meet with the headteacher or assistant headteacher.

We ask parents not to confront the bully or their parents. This can complicate the situation and distress pupils.

If parents feel that their concern has not been dealt with appropriately, they should follow the school's complaints policy.

Pupils

Pupils should not take part in any kind of bullying and should watch out for signs of bullying among their peers. Pupils should never be bystanders to incidents of bullying and are encouraged to talk to staff when they are unhappy or have concerns. Pupils in school understand that they have a right to feel and be safe and a responsibility to support others to feel and be safe. They should offer support to the victim and encourage them to report it. Pupils should tell their class teacher or any adult in school about incidents of bullying.

Responding to bullying

The following steps may be taken when dealing with any incidents of bullying reported to the school:

- Investigate carefully to establish whether bullying has occurred
- Listen carefully to pupils reporting concerns and involve children as far as possible in finding solutions
- Pass all cases of bullying involving children from other classes or year groups directly to the Phase Leader of the appropriate phase.
- Pass all serious or repeated cases of bullying directly to the Headteacher
- Pass any safeguarding concerns to a DSL
- Senior leaders will speak with and inform other members of staff where appropriate
- Offer appropriate support to the victim

- Involve the parents/carers of both the victim and the perpetrator as deemed necessary by the school
- The school will ensure that parents/carers are kept informed about the concern and action taken as appropriate and in line with child protection and confidentiality policies.
- Undertake to support and guide the perpetrator/s of bullying in an attempt to change their behaviour
- Apply sanctions, as identified within the school's behaviour policy, where appropriate. These sanctions will be decided by the school and will be based on each individual case.
- Follow up the incident to check that bullying has not re-occurred.
- The Headteacher maintains a record of all identified cases of bullying which is monitored and reported to the governing body.
- The headteacher/assistant headteacher will work with staff to assess whether any other authorities (such as police or local authority) need to be involved, particularly when actions take place outside school.

Bullying outside of school

Bullying is unacceptable and will not be tolerated, whether it takes place inside or outside of school. Bullying can take place on the way to and from school, before or after school hours, at the weekends or during school holidays, or in the wider community. The nature of cyber-bullying in particular means that it can impact on pupils' wellbeing beyond the school day. Staff, parents and carers, and pupils must be vigilant to bullying outside of school and report and respond according to their responsibilities outlined in this policy.

Where the bullying of or by pupils takes place off the school site or outside of normal school hours, the school will ensure that the concern is investigated. If required, a DSL will collaborate with other schools. Appropriate action will be taken, including providing support and implementing sanctions in school in accordance with this policy and the school's behaviour policy.

Training

The Headteacher is responsible for ensuring that all school staff receive regular training on all aspects of the anti-bullying policy.

Monitoring the policy

The Headteacher is responsible for monitoring the policy on a day-to-day basis. The Headteacher is responsible for monitoring and analysing the recorded data on bullying. Any trends should be noted and reported.

Evaluating and reviewing

The Headteacher is responsible for reporting to the governing body (and the local authority where applicable) on how the policy is being enforced and upheld, via the termly Headteacher's report. The governing body is in turn responsible for evaluating the effectiveness of the policy via the termly report and by in school monitoring such as learning walks and focus groups with pupils. If further improvements are required, school policy and anti-bullying strategies should be reviewed.

This policy is reviewed annually by the governing body.

This policy should be read in conjunction with other school policies:

- Behaviour Policy
 - Equality and Diversity Policy
 - SEND Policy
 - Online Safety Policy
 - Child Protection and Safeguarding Policy
 - Valuing All God's Children
 - Complaints Policy
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