



St Mary's RC Primary School

Anti-Bullying Policy

A Definition of Bullying

There is no legal definition of bullying. However, at St Mary's, we recognise bullying to be the use of aggression over a period of time, with the intention of hurting another person – either physically or emotionally. Bullying results in pain and distress to the victim and is the result of an imbalance of power between perpetrator and victim.

What Bullying Can Be

Emotional: being unfriendly, excluding, tormenting (e.g. hiding books, threatening gestures).

Physical: pushing, kicking, hitting, punching or any use of violence.

Racist: racial taunts, graffiti, gestures.

Sexual: unwanted physical contact or sexually abusive comments.

Homophobic: because of, or focussing on the issue of sexuality.

Verbal: name-calling, sarcasm, spreading rumours, teasing.

Cyber: All areas of Internet, such as email and Internet chat room misuse; mobile threats by text messaging and calls; misuse of associated technology, ie. camera and video facilities

Religious: negative stereotyping, name-calling or ridiculing based on religion.

If two pupils have an occasional disagreement or quarrel this is not bullying. At St Mary's we recognise that children can behave in negative, anti-social and hurtful ways towards one another, and to display some of the behaviours associated with bullying. We actively encourage pupils to ensure that bullying behaviours perpetrated by peers are reported to trusted adults so that school staff may act incisively to prevent bullying from taking place.

Aims and Objectives

Bullying is wrong and damages individual children. We therefore do all we can to prevent it by developing a school ethos in which bullying is regarded as unacceptable.

We aim, as a school, to produce a safe and secure environment where all can learn without anxiety.

This policy aims to produce a consistent school response to any bullying incidents that may occur.

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.

Rights

As a Rights Respecting School, we support the articles of the UN Convention on the Rights of the Child, namely: that all people who work with children should always act in the best interests of the child (Article 3); that all children should be listened to (Article 12); that all children should be kept safe; all children have the right to reach their full potential (Article 29). Pupils at St Mary's learn about their own rights, and the rights of others, in order to promote respect for self and others, and to encourage an ethos of anti-bullying in school.

Special Educational Needs or Disabilities

Some pupils with special educational needs or disabilities might not be able to articulate experiences as fluently as others. Staff are particularly aware of these pupils and where appropriate a named adult or buddy is appointed to monitor play times or classroom activities.

Pupils

Pupils who have been subject to bullying behaviours and/or are victims of bullying will be supported by:

- offering an immediate opportunity to discuss the experience with their class teacher or member of staff of their choice;
- reassuring the pupil;
- offering continuous support;
- restoring self-esteem and confidence.

Pupils who have been perpetrators of bullying behaviour and/or have bullied others will be helped by:

- discussing what happened;
- discovering why the pupil became involved;
- establishing the wrong doing and need to change;
- informing parents or guardians to help change the attitude of the pupil;

The Role of Governors

The Governing Body supports the headteacher in all attempts to eliminate bullying from our school. The Governing Body will not condone any bullying at all in our school, and any incidents of bullying that do occur will be taken very seriously, and dealt with appropriately.

The Governing Body monitors incidents of bullying that do occur and reviews the effectiveness of this policy regularly. The governors require the headteacher to keep accurate records of all incidents of bullying, and to report to the governors on request about the effectiveness of school anti-bullying strategies.

A parent who is dissatisfied with the way the school has dealt with a bullying incident can ask the chair of governors to look into the matter. The Governing Body responds within ten days to any request from a parent to investigate incidents of bullying. In all cases, the Governing Body notifies the Headteacher, and asks him/her to conduct an investigation into the case, and to report back to a representative of the Governing Body.

The Role of the Headteacher

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 deal with incidents of bullying.

The Headteacher reports to the Governing Body about the effectiveness of the anti-bullying policy on request.

The Headteacher ensures that all children know that bullying is wrong, and that it is unacceptable behaviour in this school.

The Headteacher draws the attention of children to this fact at suitable moments. For example, if an incident occurs, the Head teacher may decide to use assembly as a forum in which to discuss with other children why such behaviour is wrong and the punishments that result from this.

The Headteacher ensures that all staff attend sufficient training as appropriate, to be equipped to deal with all incidents of bullying.

The Headteacher 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 (including Lunchtime Supervisors)

Teachers at St Mary's take all forms of bullying seriously and intervene to prevent incidents from taking place.

If bullying is suspected or reported, the incident will be dealt with immediately by the member of staff who has been approached.

If teachers witness or become aware of an act of bullying, a clear account of the incident will be recorded and given to the Headteacher.

The Headteacher will interview all concerned and will record the incident on the school's Child Protection Online Management system (CPOMS).

If the knowledge of the incident arises through a third party, (fellow pupil, parent or other adult) similar procedures will be undertaken.

If the matter is serious or repeated then the Headteacher will contact parents and in extreme cases, outside agencies.

Each teacher has the same system for giving children the opportunity to relate any incidents that concern them when they come in from play.

If an incident occurs at lunchtime, the Lunchtime Supervisor will refer the incident to the class teacher in the first instance.

If any lunchtime staff witness a pattern of what they believe to be bullying, they will refer this to the relevant class teacher or teacher in charge (ie. a member of the Leadership Team). On further investigation, they may then report the incident to the Headteacher.

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 headteacher. If they remain dissatisfied, they should follow the school's complaints procedure, as detailed in the school's complaints 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:

- Stand up for themselves in a respectful but clear manner if someone is saying or doing something to them that they do not like.
- Tell a trusted adult in school and at home if they are being subject to bullying behaviours.
- If the bullying behaviours continue, to continue letting people know.

Monitoring and Review

This policy is monitored on a day-to-day basis by the headteacher, who reports to governors on request about the effectiveness of the policy.

The anti-bullying policy is the governors' responsibility, and they review its effectiveness annually. They do this by examining the school's Child Protection Online Management system (CPOMS), where incidents of bullying are recorded, and by discussion with the Headteacher. Governors analyse information for patterns of people, places or groups. They look out in particular for racist bullying, or bullying directed at children with disabilities or special educational needs.