



ANTI-BULLYING POLICY

Anti-Bullying Policy for St Mary's C.E. School

First agreed by Governing Body:	March 2000
Revised and Updated:	2008, 2010, 2013, Spring 2016
Reviewed by:	Ben Egan / Ruth Knight
Next review:	Spring 2019

Anti-Bullying Policy

The aim of our document is to reinforce the message that bullying blights young lives and that all forms of bullying are unacceptable. Pupils need to feel safe, secure and valued, so that they can maximise their potential and get the best possible start to their lives from their time in school.

Bullying is a serious issue and claims of bullying must be treated seriously as a half-hearted response might make the problem worse.

1. The definition of bullying

Bullying is any behaviour, or perceived behaviour, often repeated over a period of time, by an individual or group that is deliberately intended to hurt, intimidate, frighten, harm or exclude.

2. The nature of bullying

Bullying can fall into one or a combination of categories:

- Physical: hitting, kicking, taking belongings
- Verbal: name-calling, insulting, making offensive remarks, spreading rumours
- Social: exclusion from social groups, being isolated or rejected
- Property: interference with personal property, theft, extortion
- Virtual or electronic (cyber-bullying): including sending malicious emails or text messages on mobile phones.

3. Who is involved in bullying – and where

Most of the bullying takes place in the playground, particularly at lunchtime, but the toilets can be a common site, or any quiet, secluded area of the playground. It may take place in the classroom. Some aspects of bullying, particularly cyber-bullying may take place out of school when there are no teachers or school staff responsible.

Children who bully others can come from any kind of family, regardless of social class and cultural background. It is important to note that children can be both bullies and bullied. Usually one pupil starts the bullying. There are often other pupils present who may:

- help the bully by joining in
- help the bully by watching, laughing and shouting encouragement
- remain resolutely uninvolved
- help the victim directly, tell the bullies to stop, or fetch an adult.

Any child can be bullied and, although *none* of these characteristics can excuse it, certain factors can make bullying more likely:

- lacking close friends in school
- being shy
- an over-protective family environment
- being from a different racial or ethnic group to the majority
- being different in some obvious respect – such as stammering

- having special educational needs or a disability
- behaving inappropriately, intruding or being a “nuisance”
- possessing expensive accessories such as mobile phones or computer games
- not having the “in” clothes etc.

4. The risks of bullying to the victims

Victims may be reluctant to attend school and are often absent. They may be more anxious and insecure than others, having fewer friends and often feeling unhappy and lonely.

Victims can suffer from low self-esteem and negative self image, looking upon themselves as failures – feeling stupid, ashamed and unattractive.

Physical symptoms may be headaches, stomach aches, bed wetting, sleeping difficulties and sadness, sudden changes in behaviour, and even passing on the bullying to other children and siblings

Other indicators may include a deterioration in school work, unexplained cuts and bruises, has possessions which are damaged or “go missing”, becomes anxious when using internet or mobile phone, particularly when a message is received.

5. Pupils’ attitudes to bullying

Pupils’ understanding varies with age. Families are told about bullying more often than teachers. We must take parents comments seriously as well as children’s. We often need to take steps to uncover bullying. Pupils are encouraged to report bullying behaviour to a member of staff.

6. Strategies to reduce bullying

a. Prevention

The school promotes an honest and open anti-bullying ethos which secures whole school community support for the anti-bullying policy. Staff can use class time to raise awareness and tackle bullying using some of the following:

- Role Play
- Story endings
- De-personalise
- Teach kindness and choices
- Encourage empathy – set empathetic tasks
- Check through observation - who thinks kindly/empathetically
- Celebrate similarities as well as differences
- Circle Time
- PSHCE lessons
- Work on the characteristics of non-bullying, non-bullied person.

b. Reaction

St Mary’s CE Primary school is committed to valuing diversity and to equality of opportunity. We aim to create and promote an environment in which pupils, parents and staff are treated fairly and with respect, and feel able to contribute to the best of their abilities.

The Governing Body recognises that no-one should receive less favourable treatment than another on the grounds of gender, marital status, colour, race, nationality, ethnic or national origin, disability, religious beliefs, age, or sexual orientation. Full consideration has been given to this during the formulation of this policy as it is the governors' aim that no-one at St Mary's school should suffer discrimination, either directly or indirectly, or harassment on any of these grounds.

The school's response to a bullying incident will vary according to the nature of the bullying. Appendix 1 outlines the specific steps that should be taken in response to any allegation of bullying.

Racist bullying incidents can include:

- verbal abuse by name-calling, racist jokes and offensive mimicry
- physical threats or attacks
- wearing of provocative badges or insignia
- bringing racist leaflets, comics or magazines
- inciting others to behave in a racist way
- racist graffiti or other written insults – even against food, music, dress or customs
- refusing to co-operate in work or in play.

Our strategies to deal with these:

- inform Headteacher
- complete "Racist Incident Form"
- be aware that even young children can understand the consequences of their actions
- listen carefully to pupils and provide opportunities to express views and opinions
- involve parents.

Sexual bullying is generally characterised by:

- abusive name-calling
- looks and comments about appearance, attractiveness, emerging puberty.

Our strategies to deal with these:

- deal with incidents in sex education particularly in Year 5 and 6
- recognise and challenge sexual content within verbal abuse
- use single-sex groupings to explore sensitive issues
- challenge sexual or homophobic language
- explore pupils' understanding and use of sexual or homophobic language.

Bullying of children with special educational needs or disabilities:

- they are at greater risk – directly and indirectly
- often about specific difficulties or disability.

Our strategies to deal with these:

- reflect on teachers' behaviour – think about how it might unintentionally trigger bullying
- avoid undue attention to differences
- make classroom activities sensitive to their needs
- peer monitoring
- teach victims to say "No" or get help.

Bullying by text messages on mobile phones or by social media (Facebook, Twitter, Pinterest and any other social media networks that may become available):

- This is an increasing problem and can often happen outside school hours. However it is still a form of bullying and will be dealt with as any other form of bullying
- Be explicit with staff, pupils and parents that the school takes this form of bullying just as seriously as any other form.
- See Acceptable Use of the Internet and e-safety Policy
- Encourage victims to save messages and let staff see them
- Involve parents.

APPENDIX 1

How to respond to an allegation of bullying

Actions to be taken:

- Report bullying to class teacher
- Report bullying to Headteacher or Deputy.
- Make time to listen to victim and perpetrator.
- Share the problem with colleagues – whole school approach, offer advice, track behaviours, how can we improve things.
- Help victim to develop social skills to handle the situation – assertiveness.
- Follow school initiative on assertiveness – how to say:
 - “Stop it, I don’t like that” } particularly helpful
 - “Don’t do that, I don’t like it” } with younger children
- Discuss with victim and perpetrator how the situation can be resolved.
- Help the perpetrator understand the effect they are having on others and change their behaviour
- Inform parents. Families have an important part to play in helping to solve problems. We will inform parents:
 - if an incident occurs;
 - if the behaviour is ongoing;
 - when a teacher other than the class teacher becomes involved;
 - when there is a complaint made by another parent which is not immediately solved by the school;
 - if the school is concerned and wants a home/school partnership to deal with the issue (care should be taken when speaking to families to ensure support will be matched to our concerns).

- Complete Bullying Incident Form (see Appendix 2)

Other helpful strategies include:

- Positive comments and feedback:
 - “You had a good break time”
 - “I liked it when you
 - “We were better as a group today because you
- Model good behaviour
- Say something about another person to recognise their contributions.
- Drama/role play – incidents and how to cope.
- Ensure “follow up” time is offered.
- Allow flexibility in timetable for circle time when needed.
- Consistent approach.
- Ensure children understand they can speak/tell staff before parents.

APPENDIX 2

Bullying incident reporting pro-forma

Name of adult investigating the incident

.....

Name of adult or young person reporting the incident

.....

Date of incident

.....

Where and when did it take place?

.....

.....

Name(s) of young person being bullied

.....

Name(s) of alleged bully or bullies

.....

Summary of incident

.....

.....

.....

What action has been taken and have parents or carers been involved?

.....

.....

State any sanctions or actions involving bully or bullies

.....

.....

.....

State any support that has been offered to the victim or to the bully or bullies

.....

.....

.....

Has the incident been resolved to the satisfaction of the victim of the bullying incident?

Yes / No / Still being investigated (please comment below, if appropriate)

.....

.....

.....

APPENDIX 3

Parent Actions

Note that the school will involve parents as per the above guidelines. If parents become aware of an incident of bullying before the child's teacher, they should follow this procedure:

- report bullying to class teacher for resolution
- if necessary, escalate in writing to the Headteacher or Deputy for resolution
- In exceptional circumstances escalate further in writing to a member of the Governing Body for resolution.