



St. Mary's Catholic Primary School

Anti-bullying Policy

Reviewed in line with Behaviour Policy

Anti - Bullying Policy including Cyber-bullying

Bullying is defined as deliberately hurtful behaviour, repeated over a period of time, where it is difficult for those who are being bullied to defend themselves. Some forms of bullying are aimed not only at the individual, but also at the group to which he or she may belong.

Bullying can take many forms, but the most common are:

- Physical – hitting, kicking, taking another’s belongings
- Verbal – name calling, insulting, making offensive remarks
- Indirect – exclusion from social groups, being made the subject of rumours and stories
- Cyber-bullying – the use of ICT by an individual or group in a way that is intended to upset others whether it be as a result of direct or indirect action

At St Mary’s we work together to create a happy, caring and safe learning environment in partnership with parents and carers. Bullying, whether verbal, physical or indirect, is not tolerated. It is everyone’s responsibility within our school community to try to prevent occurrences of bullying and to deal with any incidents quickly and effectively.

Our aims are:

- To provide a safe, caring environment for the whole school community
- To instil in our children that bullying is unacceptable and that reports of bullying will be listened to and taken seriously
- To carry out a full investigation following any report of bullying with detailed records kept of incidents and conversations
- To take appropriate action, including exclusion in cases of severe bullying.
- To communicate with parents when a complaint of bullying is made ensuring they are kept informed

Our approach to investigating bullying

In dealing with bullying, we ensure that we listen to any accusation of bullying, including where a child has expressed a feeling of being bullied. In response to a complaint of bullying, a full investigation will be carried out and records kept. The behaviour policy should be applied when sanctions are given. In school, the procedure for dealing with bullying is:

1. Discuss the nature of the bullying with the ‘victim’, recording all the facts on specific incident forms that are found in the Inclusion Files in every classroom
2. Talk to any children or adults who may have witnessed any of the incidents. Record on incident forms.
3. Discuss the incident(s) with the alleged bully/ies. Make them aware of the investigation that has so far taken place. Obtain their side of the story.
4. If the bully owns up, make it understood that bullying is not acceptable at St Mary’s. Apply sanctions relevant to the type of bullying after discussion with class teacher.

If the allegation of bullying is denied, investigate further. If there is sufficient evidence that the bullying occurred, apply relevant sanctions. Sanctions for the bully include:

- Loss of play times for a period to be determined by the Deputy Headteacher
- Suspended from school during lunchtimes for a period to be determined by the Headteacher

In investigations the senior leader/ Designated Safeguarding lead will:

1. Hold separate discussions with parents of bully and victim.
2. Discuss with Inclusion Team relevant strategies to put in place to support both the victim and bully.
3. Continue to monitor interactions between the children/groups.

Creating an anti-bullying culture in school

Our school's Behaviour Policy explains how we promote positive behaviour in school to create an environment where pupils behave well; where pupils take responsibility for each other's emotional and social well-being; and where they include and support each other. We also draw on the school's Curriculum, and promote appropriate behaviour through direct teaching, including the safe use of ICT equipment, and by creating an emotionally and socially safe environment where these skills are learned and practised. Our aim is to create a climate where bullying is not accepted by anyone within the school community.

Our curriculum is used to:

- Raise awareness about bullying and the ways in which reporting incidents is made
- Increase understanding for victims and help build an anti-bullying ethos
- Teach pupils how constructively to manage their relationships with others
- Educate children on the positive impact technology can have on their lives and how to use it appropriately and what happens when it isn't

Throughout the school we use tools such as Circle Time, assemblies, role- plays and stories to show what pupils can do to prevent bullying, and to create an anti-bullying climate in school. Our School Council offers a forum in which concerns about bullying can be discussed on a regular basis. We regularly ask children to complete a "Pupil Voice" questionnaire to ask pupils whether they feel safe in school and we will try to eliminate any unsafe areas which they report to us.

Cyber-bullying and the misuse of ICT devices, including mobile phones, are taught as part of e-safety lessons on an annual basis. Children in Key Stage 2 also learn about the power of social media and the ways in which it can be misused and what to do if you are subjected to this. As a school we also take part in safer internet day, a key reminder to our children about the importance of how to use ICT equipment safely and the positive ways in which it can be used.

Any allegation of cyber-bullying will be investigated using the guidelines set out in this document.

Reviewed as part of Behaviour and Rewards Policy