

St Marie's Catholic Primary School



Anti-bullying Policy

LEARNING THROUGH FAITH, LOVE AND RESPECT

Date Policy approved by Governors November 2016

Reviewed 2023

Anti Bullying coordinator: Mrs M J Smith

This guidance is based on the DCSF 'Safe to learn: Embedding Anti-Bullying work in schools' guidance which was first published in 2007.

STATEMENT OF INTENT

We are committed to providing a caring, friendly and safe environment for all of our pupils so they can learn in a relaxed and secure atmosphere. Bullying of any kind is unacceptable at our school. If bullying does occur, all pupils should be able to tell and know that incidents will be dealt with promptly and effectively. We are a **TELLING** school. This means that *anyone* who knows that bullying is happening is expected to tell the staff. We all follow the DCSF Bullying charter principles and use other resources such as The Anti Bullying Alliance.

All members of the school community are asked to inform the Headteacher or designated member of staff or any member of the Senior Leadership Team of any incidents of bullying. Victims of bullying will be treated in a supportive manner and their case heard in an atmosphere of positive concern.

The purpose of this document is to set out a definition for bullying and to explain the procedure to be followed for dealing with bullying. This policy should be read in conjunction with the school's policies: • Child Protection • Equal Opportunities • Positive Behaviour • Online Safety • SEND • Exclusion • PSHCE policy • Religious Education Policy

CONSULTATION

The following groups have been consulted in the compilation of this policy and ongoing consultation is encouraged.

Children:	through the School Council/Leadership Team
Parents/carers	through specific surveys
School Staff	through staff meetings and questionnaires
Governors	through termly meetings and consultation

These stakeholders are consulted when developing, implementing, monitoring and evaluating this policy.

What Is Bullying?

At St Marie's we have adopted the following definition of bullying:

'Behaviour by an individual or group, usually repeated over time, that intentionally hurts another individual or group either physically or emotionally'. It can happen face to face or on line.

(taken from the definition given within the DCSFs 'Safe to learn-Embedding Anti-Bullying work in schools' guidance)

Aims and Objectives

- To give a clear definition of bullying
- To raise awareness of bullying by ensuring that all governors, teaching and nonteaching staff, pupils and parents should have an understanding of what bullying is
- To bring about conditions in which bullying is less likely to happen in the future by ensuring that all governors, teaching and non-teaching staff know what the school policy is on bullying, and to follow it when bullying is reported.
- To ensure a whole school approach to bullying by ensuring that all pupils and parents know what the school policy is on bullying, and what they should do if bullying arises.

What is bullying?

There are a number of definitions of bullying but all definitions include the following characteristics:

- That it tends to be repetitive or prolonged
- That it involves an imbalance of power
- That it may be verbal, physical, psychological, racist, sexual or homophobic.

Bullying can be:

- **Emotional**
 - Being unfriendly, excluding, and tormenting (e.g. hiding books, threatening gestures).
- **Physical**
 - Pushing, kicking, hitting, or any kind of violence.
- **Racist**
 - Racial taunts, graffiti, gestures.
- **Sexual**
 - Unwanted physical contact or sexually abusive comments.
- **Homophobic or biphobic**
 - bullying because of sexuality or perceived sexuality.
- **Transphobic**
 - because of gender identity or perceived gender identity
- **Verbal**
 - Name calling, sarcasm, spreading rumours, teasing, use of derogatory language
- **Cyber bullying/Online**
 - Abusive email and internet chat. Twitter, Facebook and other social media misuse, messaging and calls.

- **Mobile threats**
 - by text messaging and calls. Misuse of associated technology, i.e. camera and video facilities, I- pad, games consoles. Also includes written media (notes)

Preventing Bullying

Strategies for the prevention of bullying

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 when there are incidents of bullying we will work together to deal with the situation and to learn from what has happened.

In our school we do this by:

- Involving the school community in developing our policy including a child/ pupil friendly version of our policy.
- Using assemblies and circle time in class to ensure that pupils understand the differences between relational conflict and bullying.
- Building a positive ethos based on respecting and celebrating all types of difference in our school.
- Creating a safe and happy environment, with consequent positive relationships that have an impact on learning and achievement.
- Having a positive ethos that all pupils, staff and parents understand.
- Work in school which develops empathy, social skills and emotional understanding e.g. PSHE, Citizenship, social and emotional learning programmes, circle time, peer mediation and playground buddies.
- Secure the safety of the target of bullying Take actions to stop the bullying from happening again.
- Whole school learning - reflection on what we have learnt
- Think about any safeguarding concern and report concerns to Designated Safeguarding Lead.
- Provide assurances to child that concerns have been listened to and action will be taken.
- Consider who else is involved and what roles they have taken.
- Send clear message that the bullying must stop.
- Work with both parties to find solutions. Identify the most effective way of preventing reoccurrence and any consequences.
- Reflect and learn from bullying episodes –consider what needs to happen next to prevent future bullying e.g. PSHE, Social Stories, training etc.
- Raising awareness of online bullying through regular e-safety lessons. .
- Focussed work with individuals and groups of pupils where required to support understanding and development of social skills. See Seven Step Approach
- Ensuring playground and midday staff are trained and we have a range of activities at lunchtime to promote positive play.
- Offering training to all school staff around bullying, including specific guidance on those groups who may be vulnerable, are most likely to be bullied.

Similarly we expect all adults to treat one another with respect so that appropriate models of behaviour are recognised by children. If an adult feels bullied by another parent, staff or governor, this should be immediately reported to the Head Teacher.

In the case of bullying by the Headteacher, this should be reported to the Chair of Governors.

RESPONDING TO BULLYING

- **BULLYING ALLEGATIONS** – bullying allegations can come in from a number of different sources including from the child, child’s friend, parent/carer or staff member and all will be taken seriously and acted upon. Allegations may be reported in a variety of ways
- **Direct** – through face to face contact with school staff.
- **Indirect** –through worry box, wellbeing club, a note to the teacher or other staff.

RESPONDING TO BULLYING ALLEGATIONS

Procedures for dealing with bullying

When bullying has been observed or reported then the following steps should be used: **The Seven Steps Approach.**

This approach seeks to change the behaviour of the bully and thus achieve the best possible outcome for the victim.

If bullying is reported, the following will happen:

1. The Headteacher or designated member of staff talks to the victim about his/her feelings. The Headteacher or designated member of staff will not question the child about the incidents, but does need to know who is involved.
2. The Headteacher or designated member of staff arranges to meet with the group of pupils involved, this may include some bystanders or even friends of the victim who joined in, but did not initiate the bullying.
3. The Headteacher or designated member of staff tells the group about the way the victim is feeling (with his/her consent) and might use a poem, a piece of writing or a drawing to emphasise the victim’s distress. At no time does he/she discuss the details of the incidents or allocate blame to the group.
4. The Headteacher or designated member of staff does not allocate blame, but states that they know that the group can do something about it.
5. Each member of the group is encouraged to suggest a way in which the victim could be helped to feel happier. The Headteacher or designated member of staff gives some positive responses but does not mention improved behaviour.
6. The Headteacher or designated member of staff ends the meeting by seeking assurances from the group that they will help to solve the problem. A meeting is arranged to see how things are going.
7. At this follow up meeting, the Headteacher or designated member of staff discusses with each child, including the victim, how things are going. This allows the Headteacher or designated member of staff to monitor the bullying and keep the children involved in the process.

- Further meetings will be arranged as necessary
- All interventions will be recorded and carefully evaluated.
- All staff will be informed of the action taken.
- This strategy is called “The Seven Steps Approach” and seeks to support the victim by seeking to change the behaviour of the bully and thus achieve the best possible outcome for the victim.
- This approach is the preferred method of the Local Authority.
- Parents should not confront the bully or parents, this can complicate the situation and distress the pupil.
- The school will deal directly with all children involved and their parents directly. Parents will be kept informed of any actions taken.

If, on review, “**The Seven Steps Approach**” does not work for a particular child or group of children and the bullying continues, then some or all of the following will happen:

- The parents/carers of the victim and the bully or bullies will be informed.
- The pupils concerned may be considered for the Nurture Group/Wellbeing Group
- A referral to the Wigan LA Behaviour Support Team will be made which may lead to the initiation of a Pastoral Support Programme (PSPs are a required step before any permanent exclusions can be made).
- A fixed-term exclusion may be necessary.
- The Governing Body will be made aware of the disciplinary action taken.

Bullying outside school

The Headteacher has the power to respond to bullying behaviour involving pupils whilst out of school; be it on a school trip, school activity or in the community. Conduct that threatens the health and safety of pupils, staff or members of the community will not be tolerated. The Headteacher will consider the evidence available and if the claim is proven will impose sanctions in line with the school’s general behaviour policy. In serious cases where an offence may have been committed the Headteacher will contact the local police.

Monitoring and Evaluating Incidents

The Senior Leadership Team will monitor and review the incidents of bullying regularly to identify any recurring incidents and see if these can be related to particular school routines.

Certain incidents of bullying are reported to the Local Authority.

Involving parents

Parents, who are concerned that their child might be being bullied, or who suspect that their child may be the perpetrator of bullying, should contact the school’s named person the Headteacher immediately.

Parents have a responsibility to support the school’s anti-bullying policy and to actively encourage their child to be a positive member of the school.

Parents do not have the right to request that a bully be excluded from the school

Parents and carers will be consulted at regular intervals regarding the school’s anti-bullying policy through workshops and questionnaires.

Parents and Carers are welcome to discuss any bullying concerns with the Headteacher.

Anti-Bullying Complaints

We strive to be a school where parents and carers are more than satisfied with what we do to support every child, especially in difficult situations. Sometimes situations arise where parents and carers feel that the right strategies are not in place to deal with a bullying situation. Good communication should resolve this problem. Our aim is that by careful listening, constructive discussion and sensible actions we can work together to solve problems.

If the problem persists parents and carers may wish to complain.

Who to contact

Often the child's class teacher will be able to deal with the matter and answer any questions.

More serious problems may require the intervention of a senior member of staff or the head teacher. Most problems can be solved in this way.

A complaint about the conduct of the Headteacher should go to the Chair of Governors, if the matter is still unresolved the matter should be put in writing to the Headteacher in the first instance

Formal complaint

After exploring all other avenues a formal complaint may be made to the governing body by sending a letter to the chair of governors at the school address.

A copy of the School Complaints Policy is available from the school office.

Monitoring and evaluating the policy

The school will gather data on the effectiveness of the policy through surveys with parents, staff and children. Incidents will be monitored and details given to the governing body. Parents and carers views will be gathered after any serious allegations.

A copy of this policy is available on the website. The policy is given in full to all new parents of children starting St Marie's School. A paper copy is available to all who request it. Reminders are issued at the beginning of each school year.

The governing body reviews the policy every two years. The governors may however review the policy earlier than this if the government introduces new regulations or if the governing body received recommendations on how the policy might be improved.

The governing board will seek to ensure that no child is treated unfairly because of faith, race or ethnic background, gender or disability.