



St. Mary's C of E Primary Academy
COLLABORATIVE LEARNING TRUST



Anti-Bullying Policy

Introduced: July 2023

Reviewed: September 2024

Introduction

All children at St Mary's C of E Primary Academy have the right to learn in a safe environment, and to feel safe both physically and emotionally. We promote positive behaviour and make it explicit that bullying of any kind will not be tolerated. We take any allegations of bullying seriously and we respond swiftly to incidents – both allegations and known incidents. Bullying is a form of child-on-child abuse and that its impact can be long term. By effectively tackling bullying, our school can help to create a safe environment where children are able to learn to their full potential.

Policy Aims

The aims of this policy are:

- ✓ To define what bullying is (and to ensure everyone understands a shared definition)
- ✓ To promote an environment and culture in school where bullying is not tolerated
- ✓ To set out our response to any incidents of bullying

This policy should be read alongside the following policies:

- Behaviour and Relationships Policy
- Safeguarding and Child Protection Policy
- Child-on-Child Abuse Policy

Key Responsibilities

Governors

The Governors will support the Head teacher and other staff members in all attempts to prevent and stop incidents of bullying. They will ensure that any incidents of bullying are taken seriously and are dealt with appropriately. The Governors require the senior leadership team to report upon the effectiveness of anti-bullying strategies and to keep records of all incidents of bullying.

Head teacher

The Head teacher (Ms Elizabeth McDonagh) has a duty to encourage good behaviour, the respect for others and to prevent all forms of bullying among children. She will:

- oversee the implementation of this policy
- work to create a safe, secure, caring and friendly school environment
- investigate all reported incidents of bullying
- work with parents/carers in responding to allegations of bullying
- ensure records of all allegations and known incidents are kept
- monitor the number of recorded allegations and known incidents
- monitor how swiftly incidents of bullying are dealt with

Staff

It is the responsibility of all staff to ensure that the safety of the children is of utmost important and that policies and procedures are understood and followed. Staff will ensure that children are taught and understand that bullying is wrong and that it will not be tolerated at St Mary's C of E Primary School.

Parents / Carers

Parents / Carers have an important role to play in ensuring this policy is implemented effectively. We ask parents/carers to inform us (using the correct channels) if they feel their child may be a victim of bullying and to ensure school deal with allegations and incidents, rather than dealing with it themselves. We ask parents/carers to reinforce the schools Behaviour and Relationships and Anti-Bullying Policies and to make sure their children understands the importance of asking for help if they need it.

Children

All children in our school should:

- know and follow our school rules (ready, respectful, safe)
- understand what bullying is and know that it is wrong
- talk to a member of staff if they feel that they are a witness to, or victim of, bullying
- accept consequences for any actions they take that are negatively linked to bullying type behaviour

What is Bullying?

Bullying is repeated and intentional harming of one child by another child, or by a group of children, that involves a power imbalance.

Bullying can be:

- Physical (e.g. hitting, kicking, pushing, inappropriate physical contact, taking or damaging belongings)
- Verbal (e.g. name calling, ridicule, making offensive, homophobic or racist comments, making threats)
- Online / Cyber (e.g. messaging, social media)
- Indirect (e.g. spreading rumours, exclusion from social groups, written down)

Bullying can happen face-to-face or online. Online bullying is the use of technology (e.g. social media, gaming, text messages, e mails) to harass, threaten or intimidate someone.

Online bullying can take many forms and can include:

- abusive or threatening texts, emails or messages
- posting abusive comments on social media sites
- sharing humiliating videos or photos of someone else
- spreading rumours online
- prank calls or messages, including anonymous messages

It is important to note that some of the above behaviour may occur without 'bullying' taking place. Bullying is always pre-meditated and is deliberately vindictive. Occasional falling out, or conflict, is not bullying although we recognise that this can cause hurt and distress. We work hard to ensure that all children know what is, and what isn't classed as bullying.

At St Mary's C of E Primary Academy we recognise that bullying can take different forms including prejudicial bullying against people with protected characteristics:

- racist bullying
- homophobia
- gender or transgender bullying
- related to faith, beliefs, class or culture
- related to ability, disability or special educational needs
- related to physical appearance
- related to mental or physical conditions
- due to circumstances e.g. poverty, young carers, children in care, homelessness, home circumstances

Prevention

- ✓ We create and celebrate an inclusive school environment which promotes a culture of mutual respect and care for others. We celebrate diversity in all forms so that children recognise that we should not treat people differently because of perceived or real 'difference'. We teach the children about differences between people that could motivate bullying, such as: different family situations, religions, ethnicity, disability, gender and sexuality. We openly challenge practice and language (including banter) which does not uphold the school's vision and values.
- ✓ We promote positive relationships between all members of our school community.
- ✓ Staff members are vigilant to bullying.
- ✓ We are positive about using technology and encourage its use in life; alongside learning how to use it responsibly.
- ✓ We revisit the children's understanding of and our school actions to tackle bullying regularly during the school year through worship, stories, lessons and events. We take part in Anti-Bullying week each year.
- ✓ We use school policy and procedure to record and monitor all allegations and concerns linked to bullying or child-on-child abuse.
- ✓ We use SCARF to teach our PSHE curriculum and this explicitly teaches children about relationships and mental health awareness and also promotes a positive attitude to diversity in school and the wider community.
- ✓ Our senior leadership team regularly review and evaluate our policies and practice linked to behaviour and relationships.

Response to Allegations or Incidents of Bullying

If an incident of bullying is suspected or reported the incident will be logged on CPOMS using the 'bullying' category. A member of the senior leadership team will complete an investigation alongside the class teacher. Discussions with children linked to any allegations or incidents will be appropriate to their age and understanding. Staff will gain pupil voice.

Dealing with incidents of bullying is the responsibility of every member of staff and we take all reports seriously. It is the responsibility of the senior leadership team to determine the appropriate action that should be taken and any consequences that might be issued to the perpetrator. Wherever possible, a restorative approach will be taken and all actions will be reported on CPOMS.

Where appropriate and possible, parents/carers will be informed of allegations and incidents and any investigations that have taken place.

Consequences for the perpetrator may include:

- loss of privileges
- reduced or removal from break, lunchtimes or after school clubs
- removal from the classroom
- individual behaviour plan
- home/school log
- involvement from outside agencies
- fixed term suspension from school
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Any children who have suffered as a result of bullying and/or conflict with another child will be supported.

This might be by:

- dedicated opportunities to talk about the incident with a trusted member of staff
- reassurance and emotional support
- counselling or mentoring sessions
- well-being check ins with our pastoral leader
- support in future interactions with the perpetrator (to be appropriate and agreed)

Records of Allegations and Incidents of Bullying

All allegations and incidents of bullying are recorded on CPOMS. The incident log will record the detail of the incident, the child's voice, any conversations with parents/carers and any outcomes or actions taken. When logging incidents on CPOMS the primary report will be logged as the victim and the perpetrator will be linked.

Monitoring and Reporting

The number of allegations of bullying and any known incidents will be reported to Governors. The implementation and effectiveness of this policy will be monitored by the senior leadership team.