

St Mary's Primary School



Anti-bullying Policy

2015

Mission Statement

“At St Mary’s the child is at the heart of the Catholic faith community. As a school we aim to provide a high standard of child centred education in a safe supportive learning environment, where respect and Christian values are promoted. ”

“Children have the right to be protected from all forms of violence (physical and mental). They must be kept safe from harm and be given proper care by those looking after them.”

(United Nations Convention on the “Rights of the Child”)

Introduction

The DENI Document Pastoral Care in Schools 1999 defines bullying as: “an act of aggression causing embarrassment, pain or discomfort to someone. It can take a number of forms: physical, verbal, making gestures, extortion and exclusion. It is an abuse of power. It can be planned and organised, or it may be unintentional. It may be perpetrated by individuals or by a group of pupils.”

What Is Bullying?

Bullying is the use of aggression with the intention of hurting another person. Bullying results in pain and distress to the victim.

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 & Internet chat room misuse.
- Mobile threats by text messaging & calls.
- Misuse of associated technology, i.e. camera & video facilities.

What is bullying?

Bullying, says the DfES, is deliberately hurtful behaviour repeated often over a period of time. Others argue that bullying doesn't have to imply a series of incidents – it can be any occasion where someone deliberately intimidates or harasses another. It is important to note that children are often disturbed enough to call ChildLine after only a single incident.

Those who have called have described bullying as: being called names being teased being hit, pushed, pulled, pinched or kicked having their bag, mobile or other possessions taken receiving abusive text messages or emails being forced to hand over money being forced to do things they don't want to do being ignored or left out, being attacked because of religion, gender, sexuality, disability, appearance or ethnic or racial origin.

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 and where pupils feel safe and secure.
- To raise pupils' awareness of bullying and how to deal with it.
- To produce a consistent school response to any bullying incidents that may occur and to develop strategies to deal with all aspects of bullying.
- 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.
- Bullying will not be tolerated.

Signs and Symptoms

A child may indicate by signs or behaviour that he or she is being bullied. Adults should be aware of these possible signs and that they should investigate if a child:

- is frightened of walking to or from school;
- doesn't want to go on the school / public bus;
- begs to be driven to school;
- changes their usual routine;
- is unwilling to go to school (school phobic);
- begins to truant;
- becomes withdrawn anxious, or lacking in confidence;
- starts stammering;
- attempts or threatens suicide or runs away;
- cries themselves to sleep at night or has nightmares;
- feels ill in the morning;
- begins to do poorly in school work;
- comes home with clothes torn or books damaged;
- has possessions which are damaged or " go missing";
- asks for money or starts stealing money (to pay bully);
- has dinner or other monies continually "lost";
- has unexplained cuts or bruises;
- comes home starving (money / lunch has been stolen);
- becomes aggressive, disruptive or unreasonable;
- is bullying other children or siblings;
- stops eating;
- is frightened to say what's wrong;
- gives improbable excuses for any of the above;
- is afraid to use the internet or mobile phone;
- is nervous & jumpy when a cyber message is received.

These signs and behaviours could indicate other problems, but bullying should be considered a possibility and should be investigated

The role of governors

The governing body supports the principal in all attempts to eliminate bullying from our school. This policy statement makes it very clear that the governing body does not allow bullying to take place in our school, and that any incidents of bullying that do occur are taken very seriously and dealt with appropriately.

The governing body monitors the incidents of bullying that occur, and reviews the effectiveness of the school policy regularly. The governors require the principal 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.

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 principal 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 principal

It is the responsibility of the principal 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 principal reports to the governing body about the effectiveness of the anti-bullying policy on request.

The principal ensures that all children know that bullying is wrong, and that it is unacceptable behaviour in this school. The principal draws the attention of children to this fact at suitable moments. For example, if an incident occurs, the principal may decide to use assembly as a forum in which to discuss with other children why this behaviour was wrong, and why a pupil is being punished.

The principal ensures that all staff receive sufficient training to be equipped to deal with all incidents of bullying.

The principal 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

Teachers in St Mary's take all forms of bullying seriously, and intervene to prevent incidents from taking place. They keep their own records of all incidents that happen in their class and that they are aware of in the school.

If teachers witness an act of bullying, they do all they can to support the child who is being bullied. If a child is being bullied over a period of time,

then, after consultation with the principal, the teacher informs the child's parents.

If, as teachers, we become aware of any bullying taking place between members of a class, we deal with the issue immediately. This may involve counselling and support for the victim of the bullying, and punishment for the child who has carried out the bullying. We spend time talking to the child who has bullied: we explain why the action of the child was wrong, and we endeavour to help the child change their behaviour in future. If a child is repeatedly involved in bullying other children, we inform the principal. We then invite the child's parents into the school to discuss the situation.

Teachers routinely attend training, which enables them to become equipped to deal with incidents of bullying and behaviour management.

Teachers attempt to support all children in their class and to establish a climate of trust and respect for all. By praising, rewarding and celebrating the success of all children, we aim to prevent incidents of bullying.

The role of the classroom assistants and dinner supervisors

Classroom assistants and dinner supervisors in our school take all forms of bullying seriously and intervene to prevent incidents from taking place. They keep records of all incidents that occur and pass on the information to class teachers. Classroom assistants and dinner supervisors routinely receive training which enables them to become equipped to deal with incidents of bullying and behaviour management.

The role of 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 their child's class teacher 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.

Prevention

We will use KIDSCAPE methods for helping children to prevent bullying. As and when appropriate, these may include:

- Writing a set of school rules;
- Signing a behaviour contract;
- Writing stories or poems or drawing pictures about bullying;
- Reading stories about bullying or having them read to a class or assembly;
- Making up role-plays (or using KIDSCAPE role-plays);
- Having discussions about bullying and why it matters;
- AS Class will use social stones, animation and puppets;
- Organising Anti-Bullying Workshops and assemblies with Childline.

Bullying outside school's premises

Schools are not directly responsible for bullying off their premises. A court judgement ruled that the principal's duty of care to prevent bullying generally only applied within the precincts of a school, although exceptionally, failure to take disciplinary steps to combat harmful behaviour outside the school might breach the school's common law duty of care (*Leah Bradford-Smart v. West Sussex County Council*).

However, the school reserves the right to take interest in and sanction any misconduct by any pupil at any time, beyond the bounds of the school day, week, and term, where such misconduct prejudices the good order and welfare of the school and its pupils.

A good deal of bullying takes place outside the school gates, and on journeys to and from school. The bullying may be by pupils at the school, pupils at other schools, or people not at school at all.

Our school's anti-bullying policy encourages pupils not to suffer in silence. Where a pupil reports bullying off the school premises, a range of steps will be taken:

- Parents of the victim will be informed;
- The principal of the school of the alleged bully (bullies) will be informed;
- Local police will be informed if deemed necessary.

Procedures

Teachers on duty and supervisors will observe pupils in the playground. They will be alert to any signs of bullying and will report any concerns to the principal. Classroom assistants and supervisors will be allocated to an area for a month to ensure continuity of observation. Any concerns should be reported to the Key Stage Coordinator, the VP or Principal.

Children are not allowed unsupervised in the school building during break and lunch times.

Where an incident of bullying is reported the teacher/classroom assistant/ supervisor will respond immediately. The classroom assistant/ supervisor should initially report the matter to the child's teacher.

Any complaint made by a child or by parent that their child is, or may be, being bullied will be fully investigated by the teacher and appropriate action will be taken.

A parent making a complaint will have a personal reply from the school within 10 days.

Every incident will be responded to and recorded.

Both parties will be listened to either separately or together. The situation will be discussed calmly. Pupils will be encouraged to find a solution to the problem which is acceptable to both parties.

The bullied and the bully will be supported.

The incident will be recorded (using the Record sheet) and a copy given to the principal.

The response to and the sanctions imposed will depend on the seriousness of the case but behaviour will be monitored until staff are satisfied that the problem has stopped.

In the case of a more serious or ongoing incident it may be necessary to involve other staff. An Observation Record of daily events to ensure a complete picture of what may be happening will be kept. Completed weekly sheets must be returned to the principal. These types of incident will be dealt with by the VP or Principal.

Both sets of parents will be informed of the school's action. Regular contact with parents will be encouraged.

If the bullying incidents continue the Board of Governors will be informed.

Teachers are responsible at all times for the behaviour within sight or sound of them. It may not always be the class teacher who is involved in a matter of discipline.

Sanctions

Firstly the children will have an opportunity to explain what happened and discuss the implications of the action.

Sanctions will be applied with sensitivity, flexibility and discrimination and will be related to the misdemeanour.

Sanctions will include:

- Immediate verbal checking of behaviour.
- An apology.
- A minor penalty
- Loss of free time e.g. breacktime/lunchtime (subject to the provision that the child is given sufficient time for eating his/her meal and for toileting).
- Change of playground and monitoring of pupil.
- Referral to a Senior Teacher.
- Loss of privileges e.g. membership of school teams and attendance at after school activities.
- Placing on report. This may be on a daily or weekly basis and requires a comment from staff teaching the pupil and from parents.
- Serious or ongoing bullying may result in suspension or expulsion of pupils. Our policy on the suspension or expulsion of pupils will follow CCMS guidelines.

Parental consultation at all stages both formally and informally.

Procedures- Summary

- Report bullying incidents to staff.
- In cases of serious bullying, the incidents will be recorded by staff.
- In serious cases parents should be informed and will be asked to come in to a meeting to discuss the problem.
- The bullying behaviour or threats of bullying must be investigated and the bullying stopped quickly.
- An attempt will be made to help the bully (bullies) change their behaviour.
- If necessary and appropriate, police will be consulted.

Outcomes

- The bully (bullies) may be asked to genuinely apologise. Other consequences may take place.
- In serious cases, suspension or even exclusion will be considered
- If possible, the pupils will be reconciled.
- After the incident / incidents have been investigated and dealt with, each case will be monitored to ensure repeated bullying does not take place.

SENDO

To ensure the appropriate response to all of our children's needs and to comply with SENDO it is important that all members of staff are informed of a child's specific learning or possible medical conditions e.g. ASD, ADHD etc.

All members of staff have received training on Risk Assessment (Awareness Raising) and De-escalation and Diffusion of Challenging Behaviours. Please read the schools **Confidentially Policy**.

Guidelines for Children

1. Report the matter immediately to a teacher, parent or supervisor.
2. Explain the facts carefully and truthfully.
3. Tell the "bully" you are going to tell.
4. Walk away if you can. Do not argue.
5. Keep with others – do not become isolated.
6. Keep away from "danger" areas.
7. Ask your parents to contact the school re this matter.
8. If you see bullying report this immediately to a teacher.

Guidelines for Parents

1. Take an active interest in your child's social life.
2. If you think your child is being bullied, contact the school immediately to discuss a plan of action to help your child.
3. Make a written note of what has been said (Who, What, Where, When, How often?). Reassure your child he/she is doing the correct thing.
4. In consultation with the school devise strategies to help your child.
5. Discourage aggressive behaviour.
6. Keep in regular contact with the school.
7. If you think your child may be bullying contact the school to discuss a plan of action to help your child.

Resources

Kidscape Materials	Video: Good Sense Defence Video: On the Trail 100 Ways to Deal with Bullying Feeling Happy, Feeling safe How To Stop Bullying Kidscape Child Protection Programme
Prim-Ed Materials	4 Stimulus Posters Bullying Lower Bullying Middle Bullying Upper
Save The Children	Don't Let Them Suffer in Silence video and Teacher's Resource Book
Other AS Class	Video: Stop the Bully Now! Social stories, animation and puppets

Monitoring and Review

This policy is monitored on a day-to-day basis by the principal, who reports to governors about the effectiveness of the policy on request. A policy review will be held every two years.

This anti-bullying policy is the governors' responsibility and they review its effectiveness annually. They do this by examining the school's anti-bullying records, and by discussion with the principal. Governors analyse information with regard to gender, age and ethnic background of all children involved in bullying incidents.

This policy should be read in conjunction with the following policies:

- Pastoral Care
- AS Class
- Positive Behaviour and School Discipline
- Child Protection
- Special Education Needs
- Religion
- Health and Safety Policy
- Healthy School
- Confidentially Policy
- Attendance.