



St Mary's Catholic Primary School

Policy for Action Against Bullying

At St Mary's we have high expectations of behaviour and strive to ensure that children are educated in a caring, Christ-centred community where all are valued and treated equally.

We acknowledge that bullying can take place in any school and we believe that our pupils have a right to feel safe and happy in school.

What is Bullying?

In the DfE pack, "Action Against Bullying", bullying is defined as:

- **The wilful, conscious desire to hurt or threaten or frighten someone else. To do this, the bully has to have some sort of power over the victim, a power not always recognisable to a teacher.**

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

The pupils at St Mary's understand that bullying is "several times on purpose" and that it is not one-off incidents that occur as part of play.

Bullying can be:

- **Emotional** Being unfriendly, excluding and tormenting (eg hiding books and threatening gestures)
- **Physical** Pushing, kicking, hitting, punching or any use of violence
- **Racist** Racial taunts, graffiti, gestures etc
- **Verbal** Name-calling, sarcasm, spreading rumours, teasing
- **Text and e-mail**
- **Sexist** Gender-based

When two children have a quarrel, which may or may not develop into a fight, this is not bullying. Children do quarrel and "break up" with their friends. When we speak of bullying, we are speaking of a number of incidents over a period of time, where one child is or feels hurt, threatened or frightened by another.

Aims

Our aims are that we will:

- Prevent any form of bullying which is totally unacceptable;
- Provide a safe and secure environment where all can learn without anxiety;
- Ensure that pupils understand what bullying means;
- Ensure that pupils feel supported and confident to confide appropriately;
- Deal with bullying promptly, sensitively, consistently and effectively;
- Present and/or reduce pupil stress so they can do their best;
- Help bullies to stop bullying.

Procedures for Dealing with Bullying

We recognise our duty of care for all children and that prevention is better than cure so we will:

- Be vigilant for signs of bullying;
- Ensure that pupils are always supervised;
- Observe children's play patterns, noting children who appear isolated;
- Encourage children to report all incidents of bullying to the class teacher who may in turn refer the incident of bullying to the Headteacher;
- Investigate all reports of bullying fully and openly;
- Use the curriculum to raise awareness of bullying to the class teacher who may in turn refer the incident of bullying and to help pupils develop strategies to combat it. We will use class discussion, drama and assembly themes to raise these issues;
- Use "Circle Time" as part of the curriculum;
- Provide opportunities for pupils to express their concerns;
- Provide training opportunities for staff, especially Midday Meal Supervisors, to help them deal with these issues.

Parents are welcome to come into school to report any concerns to the class teacher or Headteacher. We believe that the involvement of parents at an early stage is essential. Parents of both victim and bully will be informed of any action taken and their support encouraged.

Once incidents are reported to the class teacher or Headteacher, they will record the details and names of the children involved. An account of the incidents may be written by the pupil themselves in the case of older pupils. When investigating, the Headteacher will involve pupils who may have witnessed the incident in order to encourage a culture of looking after one another and speaking out. This in turn, gives the bully fewer opportunities to bully and helps to ensure that there is no retaliation against the child who has been bullied.

Every incident will be dealt with as appropriate, bearing in mind the seriousness of the incident. Our first approach is that known as “The No Blame Approach” which can be most effective and helps prevent retaliation against the child being bullied. Should this prove ineffective, other measures will be taken. Should an actual assault occur, parents of the bullied child have the right to involve the police. In any case, there may be a punishment such as fixed term exclusion. Place2Be may be involved to support in cases where the bully needs help to learn how to control his or her aggression. The child who has been bullied may also need help to learn strategies to assert him or herself in a sensible way.

There will always be a series of follow-up meetings with the child who has been bullied in order to check that the situation has been effectively dealt with.

Review

This policy forms part of the Behaviour Policy of the school and will be kept under review.