



ST MARY'S

Church of England Primary School

Anti-Bullying Policy



2024 - 2027

St Mary's C of E Primary

Name of Policy: Anti Bullying Policy

Author: Carol Benson

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Review date: October 2026

This school is committed to safeguarding and promoting the wellbeing of all children, and expects our staff and volunteers to share this commitment. Please report any safeguarding or child protection concerns to the designated teachers for Child Protection:
Mrs Benson, Mrs Whitehead, Mr Butterwick & Miss Clayton

The Governors and Staff of St Mary's CE Primary School are committed to educating the children spiritually, academically, emotionally and physically within a distinctive Christian ethos.

“Together we nurture and inspire so that everyone can flourish”

“The kingdom of heaven is like a mustard seed, which a man took and planted in his field. ³² Though it is the smallest of all seeds, yet when it grows, it is the largest of garden plants and becomes a tree, so that the birds come and perch in its branches.”

The parable of the mustard seed. Matthew 13:31-32

Love, respect and moral understanding lie at the heart of the ethos of St Mary's Church of England Primary School. We see our learners as the future custodians of God's world. We aim to nurture and encourage happy individuals who are socially engaged and curious about life within and beyond their own community. We value and encourage difference and diversity. St Mary's is a nurturing, safe place for children to question, to learn to love and respect other people and to discover their place in the world. We have traditional values, rooted in the Christian faith, as well as global, 21st Century aspirations for all our pupils.

St Mary's is part of the Wharfe Valley Learning Partnership, a collaborative of schools in Wetherby and Boston Spa, where the vision for all children is to be respectful, globally aware and compassionate as well as ambitious, resilient and engaged in their learning.



Statement of Intent

Bullying of any kind is unacceptable and will not be tolerated at St Mary's C of E Primary School. We are committed to providing a caring, friendly and safe environment to promote the well-being of all our pupils so they can learn in a relaxed and secure atmosphere. If bullying does occur, all pupils are expected to tell, never retaliate and know that incidents will be dealt with promptly and effectively. All incidents will be dealt with by a member of staff; and any serious incidents will be investigated and recorded by the Headteacher and reported to Governors. All stakeholders should have an understanding of bullying and our policy and procedures and be assured of support. All staff at St Mary's C of E Primary School are committed to ensuring that no child is treated unfairly due to race, gender, disability, religion/belief, sexual orientation, gender reassignment or pregnancy/maternity.

Bullying can include:

Type of abuse	Definition
Emotional	Being unfriendly, excluding, tormenting, hazing, name-calling, sarcasm, spreading rumours, teasing
Verbal	Name calling, spreading rumours, threats, teasing, making rude comments, making fun of someone
Physical	Hitting, kicking, pushing, throwing stones, biting, spitting, taking another's belongings, any use of violence
Cyber-bullying	Bullying that takes place online, such as through social networking sites, messaging apps or gaming sites
Sexual	Explicit sexual remarks, display of sexual material, sexual gestures, unwanted physical attention, comments about sexual reputation or performance, or inappropriate touching, up skirting. For more information on how school deals with child on child sexual violence and sexual harassment, please refer to Safeguarding Policy.
Discriminative	Any type of bullying which target a pupil based on race, gender, disability, religion/belief, sexual orientation, gender reassignment or pregnancy/maternity.

Staff at St Mary's Primary School will not tolerate any form of bullying, harassment or peer on peer abuse. All bullying will be treated as serious behavioural infringement under the school's behaviour policy.

What is bullying?

Bullying is defined as the repetitive, intentional harming of one person or group by another person or group.

Bullying is, therefore:

- Deliberately hurtful
- Repeated, often over a period of time
- Difficult to defend against

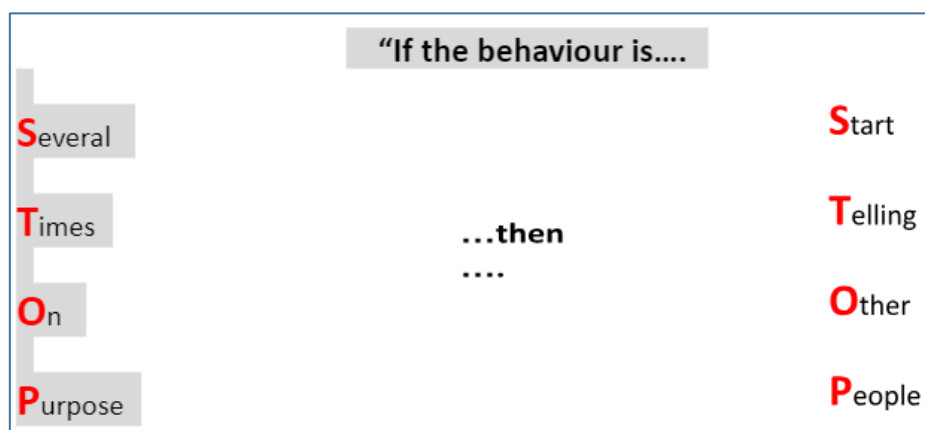
Bullying is not:

It is important to understand that bullying is not the odd occasion of falling out with friends, name calling, arguments or when the occasional trick or joke is played on someone. It is bullying if it is done several times on purpose (STOP). Children sometimes fall out and say things because they are upset.

When occasional problems like this arise, it is not classed as bullying. It is an important part of children's development to learn how to deal with friendship breakdowns, the odd name calling or childish prank. Children need to learn how to deal with these situations and develop social skills to repair relationships.

Unkind behaviour is not tolerated, but on occasion, is inevitable and will be dealt with in a constructive way so that children learn from their mistakes.

At St Mary's, we use the following acronyms to define bullying and to guide pupils in how to initially deal with it.



Why is it important to respond to bullying?

Bullying hurts. No one deserves to be a victim of bullying. Everybody has the right to be treated with respect. Pupils who are bullying need to learn different ways of behaving.

We will employ the following strategies:

- It is made clear that bullying is not acceptable or tolerated by staff or pupils, all incidents reported and serious incidents recorded.
- If a child is being bullied, action must be taken.
- Support will be offered to the victim and the bully. The Learning Mentor may work with both children to provide support and to ensure the root cause of the bully's behaviour is addressed.
- The bully will be aware of the unacceptable behaviour and the consequences of any repetition.
- The bully will be asked to genuinely apologise.
- Parents/carers will be informed of incidents of bullying and school will work with all families involved to ensure effective action is taken.
- Outside agencies may be called upon for support and if necessary and appropriate, police will be consulted.
- Staff will monitor children's response to school life; signs of distress will be followed up.
- Parents/carers are encouraged to express concerns, initially to their child's class teacher, but **should not**, on any account, approach the other child or family directly.
- Bullying issues and management strategies will be proactively taught through assemblies, stories, circle time, drama, PSHE, Mind Mate lessons, work with the Learning Mentor and RE, to name a few.

Possible indications that a child is being bullied:

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
- asks to be driven/accompanied to school
- changes their usual routine/behaviour e.g. setting off to school late
- is unwilling to go to school
- becomes withdrawn, anxious or lacking in confidence
- becomes upset at bedtime or has nightmares
- feels ill in the morning
- begins to do poorly in schoolwork
- has possessions which are damaged or "go missing"
- has unexplained cuts or bruises
- loses their appetite
- becomes aggressive, disruptive or unreasonable
- is bullying other children or siblings
- 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 a number of other problems, but bullying should be considered a possibility and should be investigated.

What can you do if you are being bullied?

Wherever you are in school, you have the right to feel safe. Nobody has the right to make you feel unhappy. If someone is bullying you, it is important to remember that it is not your fault and there are people who can help you.

- Try not to let the bully know that he/she is making you feel upset.
- Be assertive – stand up to them, look at them directly in the eye, tell them to stop and mean it.
- Stick with your friends and surround yourself with positive influences
- Get away as quickly as you can.
- Tell someone you can trust – it can be a teacher, a teaching assistant, a lunch supervisor, a parent, a friend, a brother, a sister or a relative.
- If you are scared, ask a friend to go with you when you tell someone.
- If you don't feel you can talk to someone about it, write it down and post it in the 'Worry' box.
- Keep on speaking out until someone listens and helps you.
- Never be afraid to do something about it and quick.
- Don't suffer in silence.
- Don't blame yourself for what is happening.

What can you do if you see someone else being bullied? (The role of the bystander)

If you know that someone is being bullied- take action – and tell an adult. There are ways you can help without putting yourself in danger:

- Don't smile or laugh at the situation.
- Don't rush over and take the bully on yourself.
- Don't be made to join in.
- If safe to do so, encourage the bully to stop bullying.
- If you can, let the bully know you do not like his or her behaviour.
- Shout for help.

- Let the victim(s) know that you are going to get help.
- Tell a member of staff as soon as you can.
- Try and befriend the person being bullied.
- Encourage the person to talk to someone and get help.
- Ask someone you trust about what to do.
- If you don't feel you can talk to someone about it, write it down and post it in the 'Worry' box.
- Call a helpline for some advice.

Bullying of children with Special Educational Needs

St Mary's Primary school is an inclusive school. We provide a secure, accepting, safe and stimulating environment where everyone is valued for who they are.

Some of our children have learning disabilities and/or communication difficulties. Everyone involved in the school is very aware that these children can be especially vulnerable to bullying and we are therefore particularly vigilant at all times.

Higher attaining pupils can also be affected by bullying. Staff will treat this type of bullying as seriously and in the same way as any other type of bullying.

Strategies for the prevention and reduction of bullying

The school will

- Use positive strategies, where co-operation and non-aggressive behaviour will be praised.
- Make use of the PHSE curriculum and SEAL programme – using circle time, role-play and relevant teaching materials to support the school ethos and aims.
- Raise awareness of the policy and expected standards of behaviour with all members of staff, the children and the parent body (including circulating rules for responsible internet use.
- Organise regular anti-bullying training for all staff
- Raise awareness through regular anti-bullying assemblies
- Monitor patterns of behaviour in order to identify early signs of bullying.

These might include low self-esteem, reluctance to play out or attend school, pleas for help and reports by children to teachers, parents or other children.

Procedures for reporting and responding to bullying incidents

All staff will respond calmly and consistently to all allegations and incidents of bullying at St Mary's school. They will be taken seriously by all staff and dealt with impartially and promptly. All those involved will have the opportunity to be heard. Staff will protect and support all children involved whilst allegations and incidents are investigated and resolved.

School

The following steps will be taken when dealing with incidents

- Any bullying allegations and incidents must be reported to staff
- The incident will be dealt with immediately by the member of staff who has been approached
- Staff will make sure the victim(s) is and feels safe
- Staff will listen and speak to all children involved about the incident separately
- A clear account of the incident will be recorded and given to the head teacher
- Dependant on the circumstances, the head teacher will determine the course of action and outcome
- All relevant staff will be informed and asked to inform the teacher of any further observations

- After the incident has been investigated and dealt with, each case will be monitored to ensure repeated bullying does not take place
- Bullying incidents will be discussed regularly at staff meetings
- The head teacher will report any serious bullying incidents to the governors at the subsequent meeting (or earlier if deemed necessary)
- Punitive measures will be used as appropriate and in consultation with all parties concerned

Pupils

Pupils who have been bullied will be supported by:

- Making sure they immediately feel safe and reassured
- Being offered the immediate opportunity to discuss the experience with the learning mentor or member of staff of their choice
- Should it be required, further support will be available through the learning mentor or a member of staff of their choice
- Restoring self-esteem and confidence through SEAL work, circle time and systems in school to support emotional well-being.

Pupils who have bullied will be helped by:

- Discussing what happened with an adult appropriate to needs and circumstances
- Discovering why the pupil became involved
- Establishing the wrong doing and the need to change
- Taking a collaborative approach, parents / carers will be informed to help change the attitude of the pupil, to encourage school support and for parents/carers to address the issue at home.

The following sanctions / disciplinary steps may be used:

- Apologise to the victim(s) verbally or in writing
- Official warnings to cease offending
- Loss of playtime (s)
- Exclusion from certain areas of the school premises
- Behaviour contracts
- Exclusions from school activities including school visits, clubs and residentials
- Short term exclusion
- Permanent exclusion

Bullying Outside School:

Headteachers have powers to respond to poor behaviour outside of school premises (The Education and Inspections Act 2006: The Education Act 2011). This can relate to any bullying incidents occurring anywhere off the school premises, such as on school or public transport, outside the local shops, or in a town or village centre.

The Headteacher should also consider whether it is appropriate to notify the police of the action taken against a pupil. If the misbehaviour could be criminal or poses a serious threat to a member of the public, the police should always be informed. Where bullying away from the premises is reported to the school, it will be investigated and acted upon. This duty is very relevant to cyberbullying because cyberbullying tends to take place out of school. However the impact of cyberbullying can affect the lives and school lives of our pupils.

Cyber Bullying

Bullying With more and more of us using email and mobile phones and other electronic devices, bullying does not have to happen in person. Silent phone calls or abusive texts, emails and social networking sites can be just as distressing as being bullied face to face.

Cyber Bullying is sending or posting harmful or cruel text or images using the internet or other digital communication devices.

How we as a school deals with Cyber Bullying:

- Staff – all incidences should be reported to the Headteacher who will then ensure the person being bullied is being supported, take responsibility for investigating and managing the incident and for contacting the police and LA if appropriate. If staff want additional advice and support they can seek this from their union, professional association, Teacher Support Network
- Pupils – procedures will be followed in line with the school Bullying Policy and LA and DFE guidelines

Seven Categories of Cyber Bullying

Text message bullying involves sending unwelcome texts that are threatening or cause discomfort.

Picture/video-clip bullying via mobile phone cameras is used to make the person being bullied feel threatened or embarrassed, with images usually sent to other people. 'Happy slapping' involves filming and sharing physical attacks.

Phone call bullying via mobile phone uses silent calls or abusive messages. Sometimes the bullied person's phone is stolen and used to harass others, who then think the phone owner is responsible. As with all mobile phone bullying, the perpetrators often disguise their numbers, sometimes using someone else's phone to avoid being identified.

Email bullying uses email to send bullying or threatening messages, often using a pseudonym for anonymity or using someone else's name to pin the blame on them.

Chat room bullying involves sending menacing or upsetting responses to children or young people when they are in a web-based chat room.

Bullying through instant messaging (IM) is an Internet-based form of bullying where children and young people are sent unpleasant messages as they conduct real-time conversations online (i.e. MSN, Bebo, Facebook, Twitter, etc.).

Bullying via websites includes the use of defamatory blogs (web logs), personal websites and online personal polling sites. There has also been a significant increase in social networking sites for young people, which can provide new opportunities for cyber bullying.

Advice for Parents/Carers

- Don't wait for something to happen before you act. Make sure your child understands how to use these technologies safely and knows about the risks and consequences of misusing them
- Make sure they know what to do if they or someone they know are being cyber bullied
- Encourage your child to talk to you if they have any problems with cyber bullying. If they do have a problem, contact the school, the mobile network or the Internet Service Provider (ISP) to do something about it

- Parental control software can limit who your child sends emails to and who he or she receives them from. It can also block access to some chat rooms
- Moderated chat rooms are supervised by trained adults. Your ISP will tell you whether they provide moderated chat services
- Make it your business to know what your child is doing online and who your child's online friends are. It is important that parents and carers ensure that their children are engaged in safe and responsible online behaviour

Suggestions for parents/carers to stay involved

- Keep the computer or other electronic devices in a public place in the house. Periodically check on what your child is doing
- Discuss the kinds of Internet activities your child enjoys
- Be up front with your child that you will periodically investigate the files on the computer, the browser history files, and your child's public online activities
- Search for your child's name online, look at his or her profiles and postings on teen community sites, review web pages or blogs
- Tell your child that you may review his or her private communication activities if you have reason to believe you will find unsafe or irresponsible behaviour
- Watch out for secretive behaviour as you approach your child when they are online, such as rapidly switching screens, changing passwords and for attempts to hide online behaviour, such as an empty history file

Advice for Pupils

- If you are being bullied, remember bullying is never your fault. It can be stopped and it can usually be traced
- Don't ignore the bullying. Tell someone you trust, such as a teacher or parent, or call an advice line
- Try to keep calm. If you are frightened, try to show it as little as possible. Don't get angry, it will only make the person bullying you more likely to continue. There is plenty of online advice on how to react to cyber bullying. For example, www.stopcyberbullying.org and www.wiredsafety.org have some useful tips:

Text/Video Messaging

- You can turn off incoming messages for a couple of days
- If bullying persists you can change your phone number (ask your Mobile service provider)
- Do not reply to abusive or worrying text or video messages - your Mobile service provider will have a number for you to ring or text to report phone bullying. Visit their website for details

Email

- Never reply to unpleasant or unwanted emails
- Don't accept emails or open files from people you do not know
- Ask an adult to contact the sender's ISP by writing abuse@ and then the host, eg.abuse@hotmail.com.

Web

- If the bullying is on the school website, tell a teacher or parent, just as you would if the bullying was face-to-face.

Chat Room & Instant Messaging

- Never give out your name, address, phone number, school name or password online. It's a good idea to use a nickname. Do not give out photos of yourself either
- Do not accept emails or open files from people you do not know

- Remember it might not just be people your own age in a chat room
- Stick to public areas in chat rooms and get out if you feel uncomfortable
- Tell your parents or carers if you feel uncomfortable or worried about anything that happens in a chat room.

Think carefully about what you write - don't leave yourself open to bullying

REMEMBER: Always tell an adult

Recording of bullying will include:

- A log of reported incidents to staff and parents/carer – names, dates, nature of incident, brief summary of actions taken
- Ongoing monitoring of children known to be involved in bullying or suffering from bullying. The head teacher will keep a reference file and continue communication as long as possible
- An annual return of bullying incidents by the Headteacher to the full Governing body.

Monitoring, evaluation and review

The school will review this policy annually and assess its implementation and effectiveness.

External support:

Anti-Bullying Alliance – www.anti-bullyingalliance.org.uk

Kidscape – www.kidscape.org.uk

Childline – 0800011111

Bullying Online – www.bullying.co.uk

Parentline plus – www.parentlineplus.org.uk

Cyberbullying.org – www.cyberbullying.org.uk