

# St Mary & St Michael's Catholic Primary School



## Anti-Bullying Policy

'We are all unique and can reach our full potential in the loving family of St Mary & St Michael's Catholic Primary School. Walking with Jesus, caring for each other, we learn together in the warmth of our school home.'

Agreed by staff: February 2022  
(updated September 2022)

Shared with parents: March 2022

Governors: Spring 2022

Review Date: February 2024

## **Anti-Bullying Policy**

### **Rationale**

Everyone at St Mary & St Michael's Catholic Primary School has the right to feel welcome, secure and happy. Only if this is the case will all members of the school community be able to achieve to their maximum potential. Bullying of any sort prevents this being able to happen and prevents equality of opportunity. It is everyone's responsibility to prevent this happening and this policy contains guidelines to support this ethos.

Where bullying exists the victims must feel confident to activate the anti-bullying systems within the school to end the bullying. It is our aim to challenge attitudes about bullying behaviour, increase understanding for the victims and perpetrators and help build an anti-bullying ethos in the school.

This document outlines how we make this possible at St Mary & St Michael's Catholic Primary School.

### **Definitions of Bullying**

Bullying/Child on child abuse is deliberately hurtful behaviour that is repeated over a period of time, making it difficult for the person concerned to defend themselves. This can take the form of name-calling, violence, threatened violence, isolation, ridicule or indirect action such as spreading unpleasant stories about someone.

The school works hard to ensure that all pupils know the difference between bullying and "falling out".

### **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 is NOT a single incident it is systematic and prolonged and usually involves an imbalance of power. Bullying can take many different forms:

- Cyberbullying: e.g., chatroom/ blogs/message board, email, gaming console, 'happy slapping', Instant messaging (Snap Chat, WhatsApp etc.), mobile phones including photos, social network site e.g., Facebook, video hosting sites (YouTube), webcam, Sexting
- Damage to property: e.g., graffiti, personal property
- Inciting others to bullying behaviour e.g., encouraging pupils to bully others so that they receive the consequences rather than the instigator
- Emotional – being unfriendly, excluding, tormenting (e.g., hiding books, spreading rumours,

threatening gestures)

- Literature: e.g., distribution/possession of posters/leaflets, literature, or material, e.g. wearing or display of offensive insignia
- Physical hurt/attack: e.g., physical intimidation, mimicry, unwanted or inappropriate touching
- Psychological: e.g., damage to reputation (sexual, denial of identity, gender /ethnicity), extortion of belongings, identity theft / impersonation, isolation /refusal to work/play with other pupil, revealing personal information, threats
- Verbal: e.g., 'joke' making, mimicry/ridicule, name calling, spreading rumours, swearing, verbal abuse, gossiping
- Victimisation after previous complaint e.g., bullying due to either victims or bystanders speaking out because of a past bullying incident.

### **Signs and Symptoms of Bullying**

Signs of bullying can be extremely variable and will very much depend on the individual. It is important, however, that parents/carers and school staff are aware of the signs and symptoms associated with bullying so that they can identify possible problems. The more common signs include:

- Physical signs e.g., Physical injuries, damaged clothing with no convincing explanation and general ill-health due to stress
- Emotional signs e.g., mood swings, apparent changes in personality, constant anxiety/nervousness, depression or tearfulness for no apparent reason, lack of confidence, negative self-image, hostility, and defensiveness
- Behavioural signs e.g., withdrawn, frequent, unexplained absences, poor concentration, eating disorders, alcohol/substance misuse, evidence of self-harming and disruptive/challenging/ bullying behaviour
- General e.g., frequently “lose” money/possessions, appears tired and lethargic, avoids entering/ leaving school with others.

It should be stated that usually victims of bullying become so through no fault or action of their own.

### **Actions to Tackle Bullying**

At St Mary & St Michael’s Catholic Primary School we will be vigilant for signs of bullying and always take reports of incidents seriously. We will use the curriculum whenever possible to reinforce the ethos of the school and help pupils to develop strategies to combat bullying-type behaviour.

Pupils are told that they must report any incidents of bullying/child on child abuse, to an adult within school; and that when another pupil tells them that they are being bullied or if they see bullying taking place, it is their responsibility to report this to a member of staff. All children also have access to our pastoral support in school.

All reported incidents of bullying will be investigated and taken seriously by staff members. A record will be kept of incidents on CPOMS (Child Protection Online Management System). If bullying includes racist abuse then it should be reported to the head teacher verbally and through CPOMS. Any reports of bullying will be monitored through CPOMS by the head teacher and/ or deputy DSLs (Designated Safeguarding Leads).

Upon discovery of an incident of bullying, we will discuss with the children involved the issues appropriate to the incident and to their age and level of understanding. If the incident is not too serious, a problem-solving approach may help. The adult will remain neutral and deliberately avoid direct, closed questioning which may be interpreted as accusatory or interrogational in style. Each pupil must be given an opportunity to talk and the discussion should remain focused on finding a solution to the problem and stopping the bullying recurring. Also, the use of restorative questions will be used (see Behaviour Policy).

Through PHSE and focus weeks within the year, children will be taught about what bullying is. Role-play and other drama techniques can be used as well as Circle Time. This can be an effective way of sharing information and provide a forum for discussing important issues such as equal rights, relationships, justice and acceptable behaviour.

Pupils need to feel secure in the knowledge that assertive behaviour, and even walking away can be effective ways of dealing with bullying. Setting up a buddy system, or peer counseling possibly with pupils who already hold a position of responsibility, can also be beneficial.

Pupils who are worried about openly discussing an incident will be encouraged to speak to an adult in school.

### **Parental Involvement**

The parents of pupils involved will be informed of any incidents and the action taken in line with our Behaviour Policy.

Children are reminded regularly that they must tell someone if they feel they have been bullied. Whilst there is little history of bullying at St Mary & St Michael's Catholic Primary School, we believe that one case is one case too many and we believe it is essential to constantly review this policy to ensure we are in a position to strengthen our approach to this issue. Where necessary keeping the school and parents informed is the best way to solve the problem and minimize the period of time anyone has to suffer.

### **Support for staff who are bullied**

It is important that we take measures to prevent and tackle bullying among pupils; but it is equally important that we make it clear that bullying of staff, whether by pupils, parents, or colleagues, is unacceptable.

The DFE (Department for Education) has published separate advice for head teachers and all

school staff on how to protect themselves from cyberbullying.

### **USEFUL CONTACTS**

A list of useful contact numbers, websites etc for bullying issues:

Childline – 0800 1111 – A free, confidential helpline for children and young people offering advice and support, by phone and online, 24 hours a day

EACH - 0808 1000 143 - a free phone helpline for children experiencing homophobic bullying. Open Monday to Friday 10am-5pm

Parentline Plus – 0808 8002222 – a free 24hr phone helpline for anyone caring for children or textphone 0800 783 6783 for the deaf or hard of hearing

National Bullying Helpline – 0845 2255787

### **Websites**

Anti-Bullying alliance – [www.Anti-Bullyingalliance.org.uk](http://www.Anti-Bullyingalliance.org.uk) –information, resources and advice relating to bullying

Kidscape – [www.kidscape.org.uk](http://www.kidscape.org.uk) - Bullying advice, helpline, information, Anti-Bullying resources and training

Need2Know – [www.need2know.co.uk](http://www.need2know.co.uk) – youth friendly site featuring tips on how to stop bullying, what to do if you bully others etc

NSPCC – [www.nspcc.org.uk](http://www.nspcc.org.uk) - advice on what to do if you are being bullied or see someone who is

Think U Know – [www.thinkuknow.co.uk](http://www.thinkuknow.co.uk) - Website for cyberbullying and e-safety information. Has separate areas for parent/carers, staff and children aged 5-7, 8-10 and 11-1

This policy is seen as an integral part of our Behaviour and Discipline Policy. It will be reviewed as necessary and a copy will be shared on our school website. If parents would like a paper copy please contact the office.