

St Mary's Catholic Primary School: Anti-bullying policy

Overall aim

As a school we take bullying and its impact seriously. Pupils and parents should be assured that known incidents of bullying will be responded to and that we continually strive to provide a learning environment free from any threat of fear and conducive to the attainment of each unique individual.

Definition

Bullying is defined as **"Behaviour by one or more people who produce damaging or hurtful effects physically or emotionally to an individual"**

Bullying occurs when a pupil is singled out by another pupil or group of pupils. The children doing the bullying may say hurtful things, hit, kick or threaten the child. One or more of these things will happen repeatedly over a period of time and the pupil being bullied does not find it easy to defend him or herself.

In a bullying situation the bully will have some sort of power over the child being bullied. Two pupils of equal power or strength may have the occasional fight or quarrel. This is not bullying.

A bully has a willful and conscious desire to hurt or threaten somebody else. Very young children at Reception age are still very egocentric. At times they will show aggression. This aggression is not necessarily bullying as bullying is behaviorally quite complex.

We will not accept any form of bullying, regardless of how it is delivered or what excuses are given to justify it. We recognize the detrimental effect on pupils who may be subjected to bullying, and we will work actively to minimise the risks.

We endeavor to address any form of bullying and always involve parents if we have any cause for concern.

Types of Bullying

Bullying constitutes a range of behaviour:

- Physical: pushing, kicking, hitting, pinching, any form of violence, threats.
- Verbal: name calling, sarcasm, spreading rumours, persistent teasing.
- Emotional: tormenting, threatening, ridicule, humiliation, exclusion from groups or activities.
- Racial: racial taunts, graffiti, and gestures.
- Sexual: unwanted physical contact, abusive comments, innuendo, and harassment.
- Homophobic: because of or focusing on the issue of sexuality.
- Cyber-bullying: through the internet, social networking sites, or mobile phone.

Bullying- is a consistent range of the above behaviour over a period of time. It is not one off incidents.

For those pupils who are unable to inform staff about their problem, observations regarding specific behaviour patterns will be routinely established within the school.

Signs of bullying might include:

- Unwillingness to come to school
- Withdrawn isolated behavior
- Stammering
- Complaining about damaged or missing possessions
- Refusal to talk about the problem

- Being easily distressed
- Damaged or incomplete work.

Every year at St Mary's Primary School, we plan an Anti-Bullying week that highlights different types of bullying. We aim to link this with National Anti-Bullying Week.

School Agreement

We will

- Provide opportunities for pupils to seek help and support
- ensure that the bullies and victims are interviewed separately
- obtain witness information
- keep a written record of the incident, investigation and outcomes
- inform staff about the incident where a pupil is involved
- inform appropriate staff where a member of staff is involved
- Discuss an action plan to stop further incidents

Consequences

Such action may include:

- imposition of sanctions
- obtaining an apology
- informing parents of both bully and bullied
- provide appropriate training

In some exceptional circumstances, the bullying could be so severe that the school acts immediately and adopts the exclusion policy. This could be the same if extreme bullying continues after all other avenues have been used.

Parents

Parents are expected to support the school in endorsing this policy and to stress to their children the importance of sociable behaviour.

If a parent suspects their child is being bullied then in the first instance they must speak to their child's class teacher.

More often than not the situation can be resolved immediately by the class teacher.

If parents are not happy with the outcome of this action then they need to discuss their concerns with the Head Teacher. The Head Teacher will discuss this with the Class Teacher and speak to the children involved.

Under NO circumstances should parents approach children, or the parents of children, they suspect of bullying their child. This could lead to action being taken against the parent by the Governing Body.

Lunch Time

At lunch time, all bullying incidents are reported to the class teacher. The class teacher or member of staff in charge will deal with any unacceptable lunchtime behaviour.

MSAs need to be made aware of any victims of bullying so they can intervene or observe if necessary.

