

**ST MARY & ST MARGARET'S CE PRIMARY  
SCHOOL & NURSERY**



**ANTI-BULLYING POLICY**

May 2023

minor updates Oct 2023

## **Our School Values**

*Be the best I can be in ...  
Growing as a child of God.  
Be the best I can be in ...  
Loving learning.  
Be the best I can be through ...  
Caring.  
Be the best I can be in ...  
Achieving.  
Be the best I can be through ...  
Personal development.*

*Helping each of us to be the best we can be by 'living life in all its fullness' (John 10:10)*

Our Statement of School Values (2010) sets the ethos in which this policy is grounded:

“We believe that St Mary and St Margaret’s CE Primary School exists to enable every child to realise his or her potential to the fullest possible extent, whatever his or her particular needs and abilities.”

### **1. Introduction and Context**

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 measures are in place to reduce the likelihood of bullying.

This policy is written to meet the legal expectations placed on governors and head teachers to make a clear statement of how pupils are to be kept safe. It makes clear the views, intentions and responsibilities of the whole school community and lays down what will be done to prevent bullying and to support those pupils, staff or families involved in it. It reflects the good practice described in ‘Preventing & Tackling Bullying’ (2017), the most recent national guidance to schools on antibullying and “Keeping Children Safe In Education” (2023).

Whilst we have no more bullying incidents than any other primary school, the policy is written in order to reduce the amount of bullying in our school and to prevent anyone from experiencing harm from anyone else’s bullying behaviour. This policy applies to everyone in our school community and everyone needs to know about it. Bullying can take place between pupils, between pupils and staff or between staff. It may be individuals or groups, face to face or indirectly using cyber bullying and for any one of the reasons defined in Section Five.

### **2. How the anti-bullying policy links to other school policies.**

In writing this policy account has been taken of the following school policies to ensure consistency of approach between them: Safeguarding, Child Protection, Behaviour and Discipline, Equality and Diversity, Relationships and Sex Education, Confidentiality and Health and Safety.

In writing this policy we have tried to consult everyone in our school community. This has included children, parents and carers, teachers, support staff and governors.

### **3. The Legal Framework**

The law requires that Children's Services Authorities must make arrangements with partners to promote cooperation to improve the wellbeing of children. This includes the children's physical and mental well-being, protection from harm and educational and social wellbeing. The Local Authority relies on schools to support the above intentions. Beyond these minimum requirements there is a moral duty to care for our children to the highest possible standard and to make sure they have every opportunity to live happy and fulfilled lives.

### **4. Our Whole School Approach**

Our schools' approach to anti-bullying is effective because:

- It is contributed to, and supported by the whole school community – staff, parents/carers, pupils, governors and the wider community. This supports a consistent approach to how the policy is implemented.
- It is consistent with the school's values and ethos and developed by all members of the school community.
- Preventive work around anti-bullying is part of a well-planned programme delivered in a supportive environment (Jigsaw, anti-bullying week, worship times and incidentally), where pupils feel able to engage in open discussion and feel confident about asking for help if necessary.
- Policy and practice for managing incidents are consistent with teaching.
- Pupils' needs and views are taken into account when developing programmes and policies.
- All staff have access to training and support locally.

### **5. Defining Bullying**

The DFE (2017) defines bullying in its key guidance document 'Preventing & Tackling Bullying' as:

"Bullying is behaviour by an individual or group, repeated over time, that intentionally hurts another individual or group either physically or emotionally."

The DFE goes on to say: "Bullying can take many forms (for instance, cyber-bullying via text messages, social media or gaming, which can include the use of images and video) and is often motivated by prejudice against particular groups, for example on grounds of race, religion, gender, sexual orientation, special educational needs or disabilities, or because a child is adopted, in care or has caring responsibilities. It might be motivated by actual differences between children, or perceived differences."

In drawing up our school policy we have decided to define bullying in our school using the DFE definition.

Children's understanding of the definition comes from PSHE lessons (including an annual anti-bullying week), worship times and class council discussions.

## **6. Prevention**

"A school's response to bullying should not start at the point at which a child has been bullied."  
(Preventing and Tackling Bullying – DFE 2017)

There are regular opportunities through general and specific staff induction and continuing professional development to ensure that the practice of all staff working in the school reflects the anti-bullying policy and ensures that all staff feel confident in managing all bullying situations.

It is our policy in this school that in order to prevent bullying we shall:

- Make clear and explicit the school ethos which does not tolerate any kind of bullying
- Make it the norm to challenge any kind of bullying behaviour including playground name calling
- Develop Emotional Health and Wellbeing throughout the whole school community (using the Jigsaw PSHE Programme)
- Review the physical environment to remove any bullying hotspots or hidden places
- Use pupil voice to create a climate of honesty where any bullying can be confidently reported
- Use PSHE provision to develop tolerance and social skills, ensure that all pupils know what bullying is and have some strategies for managing difficult situations
- Provide professional development for all staff and workshops for parents as needed
- Use the curriculum to develop co-operation and communication skills
- disseminate the policy widely, keep it high profile and actively use its processes when necessary, effectively managing incidents and communicating outcomes openly
- provide good role models
- manage conflict and confrontation peacefully

## **7. Responding to Incidents**

This is how the school will respond to and manage incidents if bullying is reported:

The concern is initially investigated by the member of staff to whom it is reported (normally the class teacher) or by an appropriate member of staff with knowledge of the children.

Investigating a concern: All concerns are taken seriously and investigated appropriately. Concerns are dealt with sensitively and confidentiality is maintained unless there is an issue around safeguarding the wellbeing of the child.

As appropriate to the situation, the member of staff will:

- Get both sides of the story
- Treat both fairly

- Talk to any witnesses
- Liaise with the class teacher and or Lunch Time Supervisors
- Consider whether the incident is or is not bullying
- Liaise with parents or carers as needed

Following an investigation, actions taken by the school may include:

- Feedback to both children and their parents /carers
- Appropriate action being taken and consequences given (this will be within the guidelines of the behaviour policy)
- Situation is closely monitored by the head teacher and class teacher who will continue to communicate with the family as appropriate
- Supporting the child who has bullied to change their behaviour; this may be done internally or via outside agencies such as SISS or SOLAR
- Ensuring that the Child and Family Mentors will support the victim and/or the perpetrator as required
- Using small group work to support the bully and/or the victim; this will be done separately if appropriate

Records of incidents and communication with parents are kept using the school's online record-keeping system (CPOMS) and regularly reviewed. All appropriate staff are made aware of the pupils and particular relationships to monitor.

## **8. Mental Health (Keeping Children Safe in Education 2023)**

All staff should also be aware that mental health problems can, in some cases, be an indicator that a child has suffered or is at risk of suffering abuse, neglect or exploitation. Only appropriately trained professionals should attempt to make a diagnosis of a mental health problem. Education staff, however, are well placed to observe children day-to-day and identify those whose behaviour suggests that they may be experiencing a mental health problem or be at risk of developing one.

Hayley Rollins and Rachel Crawley are the school's trained mental health first aiders. Staff should report any concerns to them immediately. Where children have suffered abuse and neglect, or other potentially traumatic adverse childhood experiences, this can have a lasting impact throughout childhood, adolescence and into adulthood. It is key that staff are aware of how these children's experiences can impact on their mental health, behaviour and education. If staff have a mental health concern about a child that is also a safeguarding concern, immediate action should be taken, following the child protection policy and speaking to the designated safeguarding lead or a deputy.

## **9. Areas of responsibility**

The role of Governors: The governing body supports the headteacher in all attempts to eliminate bullying from our school. Any incidents of bullying that occur will be taken very seriously and dealt with appropriately. The governors require the Head teacher 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 role of the Headteacher: It is the responsibility of the headteacher 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 identify and deal with incidents of bullying. The headteacher reports to the governing body about the effectiveness of the antibullying policy on request. The headteacher ensures that all staff, including lunchtime staff, receive sufficient training to be equipped to identify and deal with incidents of bullying.

The role of staff: Staff will take all reports of bullying seriously. Staff will deal with incidents reported to them by following the procedures in this policy. As required, staff have the opportunity for CPD to support them in dealing with bullying.

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. If they are not satisfied with the response, they should contact the headteacher. Parents have a responsibility to support the school's anti-bullying policy, actively encouraging their child to be a positive member of the school.

The role of pupils: Pupils are encouraged to tell anybody they trust if they are being bullied or if they think another child is being bullied – and if the bullying continues, they must keep on letting people know. Pupils are invited to tell us their views about a range of school issues, including bullying, e.g. via class and school councils, focus groups and surveys.

## **10. Monitoring, Evaluation & Review**

The school needs to be in a position to make judgements about its provision for preventing bullying, about how well it knows the extent of bullying and the level of reporting and of parents' and pupils' satisfaction with how incidents are managed. In order to achieve this, children who might be more vulnerable to being bullied or to exhibit bullying behaviour are supported in a variety of ways, including peer support and through our Child and Family Mentor.

- All incidents are recorded using the schools online record system (CPOMS)
- The headteacher is alerted to incidents and monitors incidents in school with the support of the Senior Leadership Team
- Where appropriate, parents are fully informed as soon as possible regarding any incidents involving their child.
- The effectiveness of this policy will be reviewed annually or as needed by the school's Senior Leadership Team. Where changes are required, a formal review of the policy will be undertaken by governors.
- We will use information gathered from the children and parents (e.g. through HRBQ, pupil interviews, parent surveys etc.) to inform this policy.
- Confidentiality around bullying will be in line with the school confidentiality policy.

We collect the following bullying incident data and share this with governors each term:

- Racist bullying / language used
- Homophobic bullying / language used
- Online bullying incidents
- Other bullying incidents

It is the school's policy that all of the information gathered about bullying and the impact of our measures to prevent it will inform school self-evaluation.

## **10. Cyber Bullying**

"The rapid development of, and widespread access to, technology has provided a new medium for 'virtual' bullying, which can occur in or outside school. Cyber-bullying is a different form of bullying and can happen at all times of the day, with a potentially bigger audience, and more accessories as people forward on content at a click." (DFE Preventing & Tackling Bullying 2017)

The school takes all forms of bullying seriously, whether perpetrated in or out of school. Cyber bullying is an increasing issue and can take many forms (see 'Cyberbullying: Advice for headteachers and school staff' 2014). Any incidents of online bullying are investigated and dealt with in line with other bullying incidents. The school curriculum is regularly updated to include learning about how to keep safe online. Parents are also regularly advised as to ways to support children in this, e.g. through X (formerly Twitter), email or parent workshops.

## **11. Working with other agencies**

In developing anti-bullying policies, the school works closely with a range of agencies, including Educational Psychology, SOLAR and SISS as appropriate.

Signed: M Street (Head Teacher)

Date: May 2023