



St. Mary of the Angels Catholic Primary School Anti-bullying Policy

Mission Statement

At St. Mary of the Angels we work together to develop a loving relationship with God and each other, following Jesus in all that we think, do and say.

We aim to provide a broad, balanced and creative curriculum to enable every child to develop their gifts from God and be the best they can be.

Rationale

'I have come that you might have life and have it to the full'
(Jn.10.10)

The aim of St. Mary of the Angels anti-bullying policy is to

- promote a happy and peaceful environment free from threat and harassment where Christian values and attitudes are nurtured
- show commitment to overcome bullying by ensuring consistency of approach when dealing with bullying

Bullying is anti-social behaviour and affects everyone; it is unacceptable and will not be tolerated. Only when all issues of bullying are addressed will pupils be able to fully benefit from the opportunities available at schools.

What is bullying?

Bullying is defined as deliberately hurtful behaviour, repeated over a period of time, where it is difficult for those being bullied to defend themselves. The three main types of bullying are:

- physical (hitting, kicking, theft)
- verbal (name calling, racist remarks)
- indirect (spreading rumours, excluding someone from social groups)

Pupils who are being bullied may show changes in behaviour, such as becoming shy and nervous, feigning illness, taking unusual absences or clinging to adults. There may be evidence of changes in work patterns, lacking concentration or a reluctance to come to school. Pupils must be encouraged to report bullying in schools.

How do we prevent bullying at St. Mary of the Angels School?

Ultimately, strategies to prevent bullying will only be effective when placed within the context of a culture in which respect for others is consistently taught and demonstrated across all facets of school life. The Christian values, which represent the antithesis of

bullying, must be continually affirmed in the words and actions of **all members** of the school community.

Strategies to prevent bullying will fall within the following broad categories:

- 'moral education' in the context of religious education ('Come and See' scheme of work), liturgies and assemblies where the value of the individual is affirmed and the importance of qualities such as compassion, kindness, reconciliation, tolerance, respect and justice are encouraged.
- 'across the curriculum' values teaching (e.g. looking at the problem of prejudice within the context of a novel or a history lesson)
- clear statements from staff about the nature and unacceptability of bullying
- teaching specifically related to bullying in the PSHCE curriculum
- teaching more positive ways of resolving conflict through Circle Time activities such as working co-operatively within the classroom and playground, building bridges etc
- staff as role models
- students as role models, particularly those in leadership roles such as school councillors, prefects, play leaders, librarians etc.
- provision of activities which develop a culture of caring for one another and acknowledging the worth and contribution of others and which help to develop compassion
- appropriate provision of counselling or other support services where appropriate
- provision of support for parents through information workshops, support networks etc.

The Role of Teachers and Support Staff

- Act as role models of caring and tolerant behaviour
- Listen to reports of bullying
- Protect the victim from further harm
- Act to stop the behaviour recurring
- Raising awareness through the curriculum
- Helping pupils to identify bullying behaviour using '**STOP**' i.e. What is bullying – hurting other people **S**everal **T**imes **O**n **P**urpose; How do we **STOP** bullying – We **S**tart **T**elling **O**ther **P**eople

The Role of Pupils

- Pupils who are being bullied are encouraged to speak to their teacher and give him/her full details of the event
- Pupils who witness the bullying are encouraged to intervene if they are able or immediately seek teacher assistance if they can't intervene. We are a 'Telling' school

The Role of Parents

Parents play a key role in the support of both the victims and the perpetrators of bullying. The school must work in partnership with parents in the disciplinary process. Parents can assist in the following ways:

- Let your child know that bullying in any form is never acceptable. Listen to your child and take their feelings and fears seriously.
- Make sure your child knows that being bullied is not their fault.
- If the bullying is verbal, help your child develop the skills to ignore it so that the bully does not get the satisfaction of a reaction. Practice the way to walk past looking confident with head up. Practice a supply of quick (not insulting) responses – for example 'that's your opinion', 'talk to someone who cares'.

- Avoid the urge to take everything into your own hands unless absolutely necessary, as this will make your child feel less in control.
- Help your child feel good about the other things in his life. Feed their self-esteem.
- When it is clear that your own child is the bully, recognise the seriousness of the issue and support the school in implementing this policy.

How do we deal with incidents of bullying in St. Mary of the Angels School?

The following steps may be taken when dealing with incidents:

- If bullying is suspected or reported, the incident will be dealt with immediately by the member of staff who has been approached
- A clear account of the incident will be recorded and given to the headteacher
- The head teacher will interview all concerned and will record the incident
- Parents will be kept informed
- Punitive measures will be used as appropriate (see Behaviour Policy) and in consultation with all parties concerned
- Resistance to behaviour change and repeated offending will lead to consequences in the form of sanctions (see Behaviour Policy)

The school will work with the victim and their parents to assist their son/daughter to avoid being bullied in the future by

- offering the victim an immediate opportunity to discuss the experience with their class teacher or member of staff of their choice
- reassuring the pupil
- offering continuous support
- restoring self-esteem and confidence
- ensuring that the bully is disciplined appropriately

The school will work with the bully and their parents to establish joint strategies for behaviour modification by

- meeting with the bully to discuss what happened
- discovering why the pupil became involved
- establishing the wrong doing and need to change
- informing parents or guardians to help change the attitude of the pupil

All school staff must be alert to the signs of bullying and act promptly and firmly against it in accordance with school policy.

The following disciplinary steps can be taken in line with the school's Behaviour Policy

Sanctions are used for disobedience, use of bad language, racism, **and bullying**, aggressive verbal and physical behaviour. They include

- Admonishment given by the class teacher on a personal level
- Being given a task to do to help 'build bridges'
- Playtime/lunchtime detentions
- Removing a child from a class and sending to another class or the Key Stage Leader, Deputy Headteacher or Headteacher

- Setting targets to improve behaviour and writing a daily or weekly report to parents to inform them of progress towards targets
- Headteacher phoning parents to request they remove pupil from the school the same day for extremely disruptive or abusive behaviour
- Suspension
- Exclusion

Suspension and exclusion are the ultimate sanctions which the school endeavours to avoid.

Generally suspension will be considered when the Headteacher has met with the parents or written letters to the parents regarding undesirable behaviour three times in a period of a school year. For extreme behaviour it may be considered immediately.

After consultation with the Chair of Governors, the Headteacher may suspend the pupil for a period of up to three days which is seen as a cooling off period for both the pupil and the school. Once the pupil returns to school a clear set of targets and strategies for avoiding a repeat of the behaviour need to be agreed by the parents and the class/Headteacher. These will be monitored closely by the Head.

If a pupil is suspended three times, it may be necessary to consider expelling the pupil. In such an instance, the Headteacher will ask the Chair of Governors to permanently exclude the pupil from the school.

Parents have a right to appeal to the Governors.

Monitoring, evaluation and review

The school will review this policy annually and assess its implementation and effectiveness. The policy will be promoted and implemented throughout the school.

Policy reviewed/updated: March 2015

Date of next review: March 2018

