St Martin's Catholic Primary School

Anti–Bullying Policy

This policy will be reviewed every two years, or earlier if necessary.

Approved by **Gill Walton MBE Chair of Governors**
March 2021

Aims and objectives

We have a responsibility to safeguard all pupils. The aim of this document is to ensure a unified approach is practised across our school when dealing with bullying behaviour within our setting.

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.

Our Mission statement:

'At St. Martin's Catholic Primary School, the Governors and Staff, in partnership with the Parents, aim to help each child realise their full Spiritual, Moral, Academic and Social Potential in a happy, caring, Catholic community in which each member feels valued'

This underpins our school ethos in which we develop mutual respect for all, children are taught to have a clear understanding of the importance of good behaviour and how are actions affect others. We have three simple expectations which everyone in the school family should follow and these are **We are Kind, Respectful and Responsible.**

This policy aims to produce a consistent school response to any bullying incidents that may occur.

We aim to make all those connected with the school aware of our opposition to bullying, and we make clear each person's responsibilities with regard to the eradication of bullying in our school.

What Is Bullying?

Bullying is defined as:

'Behaviour by an individual or group, usually repeated over time, that intentionally hurts another individual or group either physically or emotionally'.

Bullying can take many forms for instance cyber bullying via text message, social media or gaming (this can include use of images and videos) and is often motivated by prejudice against particular groups on the grounds of race, religion, gender or sexual orientation, special needs or disabilities or because a child is adopted in care or has a caring responsibility. It might be motivated by actual differences between children or perceived differences. All forms of bullying must be taken seriously, we recognise the dangers of emotional bullying. Stopping violence and ensuring immediate physical safety is obviously a school's first priority but emotional bullying can be more damaging than physical; teachers and schools have to make their own judgements about each specific case.

Cyber Bullying

The rapid development and widespread access to technology has provided a new medium for virtual bullying which can occur in or outside of school. Cyber bullying is a different form of bullying and can happen at all times of the day with potentially bigger audience and more accessories as people forward on the information with a click.

The Education Act 2011 amended the power in the Education Act 1996 to provide that when an electronic device, such as a mobile phone, has been seized by a member of staff who has been formally authorised by the headteacher, that staff member can examine data or files, and delete these, where there is good reason to do so. This power applies to all schools and there is no need to have parental consent to search through a young person's mobile phone. If an electronic device that is prohibited by the school rules has been seized and the member of staff has reasonable ground to suspect that it contains evidence in relation to an offence, they must give the device to the police as soon as it is reasonably practicable. Material on the device that is suspected to be evidence relevant to an offence, or that is a pornographic image of a child or an extreme pornographic image, should not be deleted prior to giving the device to the police.1 If a staff member finds material that they do not suspect contains evidence in relation to an offence, they can decide whether it is appropriate to delete or retain the material as evidence of a breach of school discipline.

Bullying Outside of School Premises

Where bullying outside of school is reported to school staff it will be investigated and acted upon appropriately. The headteacher should also consider whether it is appropriate to notify the police or anti-social behaviour coordinator in their local authority 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. While school staff members have the power to discipline pupils for bullying that occurs outside school, they can only impose the disciplinary sanction and implement that sanction on the school premises or when the pupil is under the lawful control of school staff, for instance on a school trip.

Anyone can practice bullying behaviours/be a bully.

Some people know that they are bullying others and they mean to bully, i.e. there is intent. However, some people bully others without recognising the impact of their actions. Similarly, a victim of bullying might not recognise what is happening to them and that bullying behaviour has a very insidious effect that affects a person's self-esteem, confidence and well-being.

A one-off incident tends not to comprise bullying. A characteristic of bullying is that in its different forms/behaviours **it happens again and again over a period of time**.

Instances of bullying tends to have the following common characteristics:

- **Repetitive and persistent**. Bullying is usually experienced as part of a continuous pattern and it can be extremely threatening and intimidating even when very subtle. Nevertheless, sometimes a single incident can have precisely the same impact as persistent behaviour over time.

- **Intentionally harmful**. The act of bullying intends harm to another individual although occasionally the distress it causes is not consciously intended by all of those who are present.
- **Involves an imbalance of power**. Bullying leaves someone feeling helpless to prevent it or put a stop to it. In some case an imbalance of power may mean that bullying crosses the threshold into abuse requiring implementation of safeguarding procedures (refer to the school safeguarding procedures

Types Of Bullying

We recognise that there are levels of bullying. It can take many forms, but the main types are:

- physical (for example, hitting, kicking, theft);
- verbal (for example, racist or homophobic remarks, threats, name-calling); and
- emotional (for example, isolating an individual from the activities and social acceptance of their peer group)
- cyber – mobile phone calls, text messages, pictures or video clips, emails, chat rooms, instant messaging, social networking websites.

The Signs Of Bullying

There is no certain way of spotting that a person is being bullied. Staff should be vigilant in order to identify any of these physical or behavioural changes in a person as soon as possible.

The following physical and behavioral signs have been identified by a number of agencies who have undertaken research around bullying (including Kidscape, BullyonLine, NHS Choices, Anti-bullying Alliance) as indicators that bullying has or is taking place:

Significant changes in normal behaviour or attitude	Challenging behaviours
Appearing upset	Anger
Being withdrawn	Quietness
Claims of feeling unwell with no apparent signs or symptoms	Appearing frightened or subdued, possibly in the presence of particular people
Flinching at actual or anticipated physical contact	Asking not to be hurt
Refusal to eat	Refusal to participate
Unwillingness to travel on public transport	Not wanting to go to a certain venue
Starting to bully others	Incontinence
Vomiting	Unexplained illness
Depression	Bruising or other physical marks
Torn clothing	Unexplained loss of money or possessions
Sleepless nights	Repeating words the perpetrator has said to them

We also recognise the role of pupils and other stakeholders in reporting incidents and not taking on a role of bystander if they witness an incident of bullying. We aim to promote a positive, caring ethos within our school.

We as a school are taking proactive steps to support our vulnerable pupils by supporting individuals and small groups. There are designated staff roles. We are aware of our individual pupil's needs, have school intervention programmes and work in partnership with external support agencies.

Victims are more likely to have the following vulnerability characteristics:

- Lack of assertiveness, anxious or fearful and unlikely to fight back.
- Loners with few friends.
- Children with Special Educational Needs or Disabilities.
- Appearance
- Ability
- Health issues, including mental health, diet, etc
- Home circumstances
- Social class
- Ethnicity
- Gypsy/Roma and Traveller Children
- Looked After Children
- Lesbian/Gay/Bisexual or Transgender children
- Young carers.

In order to support all pupils within the school, we focus on each individual pupil. Evidence of this is recorded as appropriate through different methods, which can involve regular tracking and monitoring of absence and attendance rates, Team around the Family and Multi-Agency Plan (MAP) meetings, pupil voice and other plus targeted support for pupils.

The types, rates and patterns of bullying, and the effectiveness of the school's actions to prevent forms of bullying, including cyber-bullying and prejudice-based bullying related to SEN, sexual orientation, sex, race, religion or belief, gender reassignment or disability are taken into account.

We as a school are aware that the school has a responsibility to safeguard pupils outside school and it is our responsibility to safeguard and take action, providing evidence that we have done so. We are teaching our pupils about staying safe online and internet safety and the consequences of inappropriate actions.

The school aims to analyse incident logs, behaviour in and out of lessons, complaints, pupil/parent and other stakeholder voice, rewards and sanctions and to respond to these appropriately.

As a school, we continually monitor and measure the effectiveness of our anti-bullying policy and practice and will make changes to bring further improvements to the procedure as appropriate. The safety and wellbeing of pupils and all stakeholders is the basis for this policy and work on anti-bullying conducted by the school.

Procedure

We as a school recognise the need for a prompt response to an incident that appears to be bullying. The following list of actions form guidance for the staff who are dealing with an incident.

- Discuss and log incident with victim using patience or understanding. Consider the antecedent and environment that might make the victim more vulnerable.

- Listen carefully. Allow the victim or reporter of the incident to tell their story. They may wish to have another person present, such as a friend.

- Record events using exact wording at every stage, including actions agreed/taken. Events documented on CPOMS and recorded as bullying.

- Try to establish what type of bullying is taking place and where, how often the bullying is occurring, who is carrying out the bullying and how the victim is responding to the bullying

- Advise the victim not to hit out at the bully or bullies as they themselves may end up being accused of bullying.

- Discuss options to resolve the situation, agree actions advise the victim of what happens next.

- Identify the bully/bullies. Obtain witnesses if possible.

- Arrange to speak with the alleged perpetrator, to be able to define the experience from each person's view.

- If evidence shows it to be bullying, make the unacceptable nature of the behaviour clear to the bully, ensuring the act is separate to the person.

- Try to enable the bully to see things from the victim's position.

- Explain clearly the reparation.

- Inform the Headteacher or Deputy Headteacher who has overall responsibility for overseeing the records, reports and the effectiveness of interventions of the incident.

- Ensure that all incidents and actions are recorded chronologically on CPOMS to help build a picture of what is happening and how it is being dealt with.

- Headteacher will arrange to meet the parents/carers of all of those involved in the incident(s) and record the meetings on CPOMS.

- Think ahead about supporting both victim and bully.

- Discuss relevant documentation and resulting action with parents/carers and what they can do to reinforce and support the school action.

- Arrange follow up discussions within an agreed timetable.

Preventative Tactics

We ensure that in all aspects of school life there is an emphasis on the importance of relationships, emotional well-being and a community ethos

Individuals in the community:

- Value one another publicly
- Give frequent praise, encouragement and support
- Celebrate success and share problems

Proactive strategies for the school can involve:

➢ Social & Emotional Aspects of Learning

➢ RSHE lessons supporting pupils in understanding what bullying is and how to combat it, encouraging pupils to problem solve. Through PSHEE, children are encouraged to talk about their feelings and things that are worrying them.

➢ Peer support, buddy systems, structured playground games and Circle of Friends.

➢ Resilience building, nurture group, emotional intelligence curriculum

➢ Involving parents and professionals in being proactive.

The role of governors

The governing body supports the headteacher in all attempts to eliminate bullying from our school. The governing body will not condone any bullying at all in our school, and any incidents of bullying that do occur will be taken very seriously, and dealt with appropriately.

The governing body monitors incidents of bullying that do occur, and reviews the effectiveness of this policy regularly. The governors require the headteacher 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.

A parent who is dissatisfied with the way the school has dealt with a bullying incident can ask the chair of governors to look into the matter. The governing body responds within ten days to any request from a parent to investigate incidents of bullying. In all cases, the governing body notifies the headteacher, and asks him/her to conduct an investigation into the case, and to report back to a representative of the governing body.

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 anti-bullying policy on request.

The headteacher ensures that all children know that bullying is wrong, and that it is unacceptable behaviour in this school. The headteacher draws the attention of children to this fact at suitable moments. For example, if an incident occurs, the headteacher may decide to use an assembly to reiterate that certain behaviours are not acceptable.

The headteacher ensures that all staff, including lunchtime staff, receive sufficient training to be equipped to identify and deal with all incidents of bullying. The Anti-Bullying policy is reviewed annually by all staff.

The headteacher sets the school climate of mutual support and praise for success, so making bullying less likely. When children feel they are important and belong to a friendly and welcoming school, bullying is far less likely to be part of their behaviour.

The role of the teacher and support staff

All the staff in our school take all forms of bullying seriously, and seek to prevent it from taking place.

Teachers keep records of all incidents that happen on CPOMS. If teachers witness an act of bullying, they will either investigate it themselves or refer it to the headteacher. Teachers and support staff do all they can to support the child who is being bullied.

When any bullying has taken place between members of a class, the teacher will deal with the issue immediately. This may involve counselling and support for the victim, and consequences for the offender. Time is spent talking to the child who has done the bullying, explaining to them why their action was wrong and how they should change their behaviour in future.

If a child is repeatedly involved in bullying, the headteacher will invite the child's parents or carers into the school to discuss the situation. In more extreme cases, e.g. where these initial discussions have proved ineffective, the headteacher may contact external support agencies, such as Children's Social Care or the Behaviour Support Team.

All members of staff routinely attend training, which equips them to identify bullying and to follow school policy and procedures with regard to behaviour management.

Teachers use a range of methods to help prevent bullying and to establish a climate of trust and respect for all, and the school participates in Anti-Bullying week each year.

The role of parents and carers

Parents and carers, 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. If they remain dissatisfied, they can contact the Chair of Governors to ask that they investigate the incident.
How to make a complaint is outlined in the school's Complaints Policy which is available on request on from the school website.

Parents and carers 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, 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, in the annual pupil questionnaire and throughout the year during pupil voice monitoring sessions.

Our School Council take the lead on promoting Anti-Bullying amongst the children.

Monitoring and review

This policy is monitored on a day-to-day basis by the headteacher, who reports to governors on request about the effectiveness of the policy.

The anti-bullying policy is the governors' responsibility, and they review its effectiveness annually, incidents of bullying are recorded and reported during governors meetings and form part of the Headteacher's Report to Governors.

Governors analyse information for patterns of people, places or groups. They look out in particular for racist bullying, or bullying directed at children with disabilities or special educational needs.