

Mission Statement

St Mary's is a welcoming, caring, Catholic community which promotes the Christian values of love, tolerance and forgiveness. Through these teachings, we encourage all to grow in awareness of their role both within school and the wider community.

We are committed to enable all to achieve their full potential as unique individuals by providing the best possible education for every child and by fostering a sense of belonging and support.

At St. Mary's Catholic Voluntary Academy, we encourage all children to learn courtesy, respect, consideration and good manners towards each other through our Mission Statement and positive approach to behaviour.

We regard any form of bullying as serious and unacceptable and always take firm action against it. All children are encouraged to report to an adult any incidents of bullying either against themselves or against others.

Wherever possible and appropriate our teaching will take opportunities to reinforce positive behaviour and combat bullying. We aim to make our children self-confident and able to speak out on matters of importance.

Our Aims

- To create an environment where bullying is not tolerated.
- To ensure that all pupils are aware of their rights and responsibilities and know how to seek help if those rights are being violated.
- To encourage pupils to work well, develop good relationships and offer each other mutual support and respect.
- To encourage pupils to behave in a respectful and positive way to one another.
- To raise awareness and equip pupils to deal with bullies through PSHE programmes, assemblies, pastoral team members and peer supporters.
- To review and monitor the effectiveness of our anti-bullying policy annually.

The Anti-Bullying Alliance (ABA)

'Together we will work to stop bullying and create safer environments in which children and young people can live, grow and learn'.

Definition of Bullying

The ABA define bullying as:

'The repetitive, intentional hurting of one person by another(s) where the relationship involves an imbalance of power. Bullying can be carried out physically, verbally, emotionally or through cyberspace'

Defining Bullying Behaviour

- Bullying behaviour deliberately causes hurt (either physically or emotionally)
- Bullying behaviour is usually repetitive (through one-off incidents, such as the posting of an image or sending of a text that is passed around a group, can quickly spiral into bullying behaviour)
- Bullying behaviour involves an imbalance of power (the person or people on the receiving end feel like they can't defend themselves)

Different Types of Bullying

- 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.
- Racist – racial abuse, graffiti, gestures
- Sexual – unwanted physical contact, abusive comments.
- Damage to property or theft – demanding possessions, money, deliberately damaging belongings.
- Homophobic – taunts, graffiti, gestures relating to the sexual orientation of a person.
- Transgender – taunts, graffiti, gestures relating to the gender identity of a person.
- Cyber – sending threatening or abusive text messages, emails or images. Writing abusive or negative things about people online.

We need to recognise the differences between: bullying, bossiness and boisterous behavior -

Bullying

- Focussed on younger smaller and timid children increasingly relying on threat and force.
- Willful conscious desire to hurt, threaten and frighten.
- Play spoiling other children's activities, showing violence and hostility.
- Rough intimidating behaviour

Bossiness

- Bossing whoever is around at the time.
- Usually grows out of it as they mature and learn social skills.

Boisterous behaviour

- More natural uncontrolled – not vindictive – not unfriendly.

Signs of Being Bullied

- Unwillingness to come to school.
- Withdrawn, isolated behaviour.
- Complaining about missing possessions.
- Refusal to talk about problems.
- Being easily distressed.
- Damaged or incomplete work.
- Regularly feeling ill.
- Work not completed to usual standard.
- Setting off for school particularly early or late.
- Tearfulness, depression.
- Change in pupil behaviour or confidence.

Reporting and Recording

Informal Procedure

1. Be aware and tackle any racist or sexist language (Single Equalities Policy)
2. Give support to both victim and bully. Victim needs self-esteem and self-value. Bully needs to work with others (co-operation rather than competition). Do not bully the bully – find out why they are bullying.
3. Reward non-aggressive behaviour in school.
4. Follow up, to support victim and prevent re-occurrence.
5. Make clear to parents the unacceptability of bullying i.e no 'hit him back' attitude.
6. Help children to see other point of view..."How would you feel if...?" Make them aware of newcomers, loners or shy children.
7. In service training/discussion/staff meetings.

Formal Procedure

1. All complaints to go initially to class teacher, then Head-teacher.
2. A record of all incidents and discussions with children involved may be kept if the teacher and Head-teacher decide this would be useful.
3. Teachers and the Head-Teacher will involve parents and explain action taken, where appropriate, and in consultation with the Head-teacher. Communication with parents, when deemed necessary, will involve either speaking personally, sending a report, or telephoning the parents after the matter has been dealt with.
4. Where the Headteacher becomes involved, it will normally be his/her responsibility to inform parents of both the victim and the bully.
5. If further action is required, reference will be made to the School's Complaints Policy.

Monitoring and Evaluation

- The Anti-Bullying Policy will be reviewed by the Governing Body involving consultation with the School Council.
- The following performance indicators are used to evaluate the policy within the context of the pastoral support given to all students and staff.
- Behaviour on the school site
- Levels of punctuality and attendance
- Evidence of self-discipline
- Good manners and consideration for others
- Level of exclusion
- Police referrals
- Referrals through the pastoral support programme for agency involvement
- Feedback from student council and parental questionnaires
- Involving the Police and Other Outside Agencies

If the Head-teacher is concerned that a crime may have been committed, the police will be contacted as soon as possible for a consultation with them to determine the next steps. The police can advise the school on whether the incident is a criminal matter or a case for the school to investigate and resolve.

If the school has concerns that there may be child protection concerns with an incident, the school's child protection policy will be adhered to and relevant agencies will be contacted as soon as possible

School Procedures to deal with bullying

All staff will:

1. once alerted to any possible incident be vigilant in both classroom and playtime. It is important to use
2. the school communication systems so that all staff can be vigilant e.g. staff briefing, Headteacher, Deputy Headteacher, Learning Mentor.
3. All racist incidents must be reported to the Headeacher (see Race Equality Policy).
4. Reward non-aggressive and caring behaviour in line with school policy (Behaviour Policy).
5. Give support to both victim and bully. Both may need additional support from the Learning Mentor.
6. Follow up, to support victim and prevent re-occurrence.
7. Use peer group pressure to promote the positive.
8. Speak to parents about the unacceptability of bullying e.g. no "hit him back" attitude.
9. Participate in INSET/discussions where appropriate.
10. Ensure adequate supervision in the playground on duty days.
11. Report incidents to the Headteacher, Deputy Headteacher or Learning Mentor.

Working with parents

When bullying has been identified parents of both the victim and perpetrator will be contacted to discuss concerns. The school will keep a record of children involved in any such incidents.

Where parents raise concerns about their child being bullied the school will take these seriously, investigate them and report back the findings to parents.

Links with other policies

- Behaviour Policy
- Race Equality Policy
- Inclusion
- Home/School Agreement