



St. Mary's CE Infant School

Anti-Bullying Policy

At St. Mary's we are committed to providing a caring, friendly and safe environment for all of our pupils so they can learn in a relaxed and secure atmosphere. Bullying of any kind is unacceptable at our school. If bullying does occur, all pupils should be able to tell and know that incidents will be dealt with promptly and effectively. We are a **TELLING** school. This means that **anyone** who knows that bullying is happening is expected to tell the staff.

Definition of bullying:

At St Mary's we refer to bullying in a simple, child-friendly manner that is age appropriate for Infant children. We define 'Bullying as:

- Several
- Times
- On
- Purpose (STOP).

This definition has been agreed with the pupils, staff and governors. We have used the Social and Emotional Aspects of Learning (SEAL) document in order to develop this simplified definition. We teach pupils the difference between this and 'falling out' and ensure that they know the difference between the two. We make it clear that 'bullying' means deliberately using power over another to make them feel bad.

The Department for Education (DfE) define bullying as '**behavior by an individual or group , usually repeated over time, that intentionally hurts another individual or group either physically or emotionally**'.

Why is it important to respond to bullying?

Bullying hurts. No one deserves to be a victim of bullying. Everybody has the right to be treated with respect. We also acknowledge that a child exhibiting bullying behaviour is, or has often been, a victim themselves. We are also careful to ensure that children do not become labelled as 'bullies' or 'victims', which implies fixed roles. Rather, we look at the types of behavior presented which enables us to promote change.

Our aims

- For all governors, teaching and support staff, pupils and parents/carers to have an understanding of what bullying is
- To prevent bullying from happening at St. Mary's CE Infant School

- To clarify procedures for dealing with incidents so that they are clear to children, staff and parents/carers
- To give children the confidence to speak up and report any incidents taking place
- To monitor the number of incidents and regularly review strategies for prevention

Types of bullying

There is no clear image of bullying behaviour or of a bully type. Some children may use threats of violence or actual physical intimidation, while others might prefer verbal malice, exclusion of the victim or the setting of others against their chosen victim. All bullying is aggression, be it physical, verbal or psychological, although not all aggression is necessarily bullying. Some bullies are also the victims and sometimes victims become bullies themselves.

- Emotional being unfriendly, excluding, tormenting (e.g. hiding books, threatening gestures)
- Physical pushing, kicking, hitting, punching or any use of violence
- Racist racial taunts, gestures
- Religious taunting someone because of their religious or spiritual beliefs
- Sexual unwanted physical contact or sexually abusive comments
- Homophobic/ Biphobic because of, or focussing on the issue of sexuality
- Verbal name-calling, sarcasm, spreading rumours, teasing
- Cyber impact of any form of cyber bullying which takes place at home
- Sexist/Gender based negative or perjorative comments based on gender or gender stereotyped roles
- Special Educational Needs or Disabilities teasing due to an additional need or disability

Signs and Symptoms

A child may indicate by signs or behaviour that he or she is a target of bullying behaviour. Adults should be aware of these possible signs and that they should investigate if a child:

- Is frightened of walking to or from school
- Changes their usual routine
- Is unwilling to go to school
- Becomes withdrawn, anxious, or lacking in confidence
- Starts stammering
- Runs away
- Cries themselves to sleep at night or has nightmares
- Feels ill in the morning
- Begins to do poorly in school work
- Comes home with clothes torn or has possessions which are damaged or "go missing"
- Has unexplained cuts or bruises
- Becomes aggressive, disruptive or unreasonable
- Is bullying other children or siblings
- Stops eating
- Is frightened to say what is wrong
- Gives improbable excuses for any of the above

These signs and behaviours could indicate other problems but bullying should be considered as a possibility and should be investigated.

Bullying may not be happening in school. At times, it can be outside of the school, for example, walking to and from school, during weekends (at the park), cyberbullying. If this sort of bullying is suspected to be taking place the school will investigate the incident and contact the parents of the children involved. The school will intervene at a point where it is deemed that the offending behavior outside of school is having a negative impact on the child either academically or socially.

In order to prevent bullying:

The Headteacher will:

- Reinforce and model the school rules and to promote positive behaviour
- Support staff by following up reported incidents
- Communicate regularly with parents when concerns have been referred and follow up with parents to ensure the situation remains resolved
- Monitor the policy's effectiveness
- Report any bullying incidents to the Full Governing Body through the headteacher's report.
- Use Behaviour Support Services if problems persist
- Provide information for parents and carers about bullying and how they should support their child and communicate with the school.
- Supply all parents and carers with a simplified version of the policy
- Ensure children have information about what to do or who to talk to if they are bullied or know someone who is being bullied.
- Ensure a pupil-friendly version of the school policy is shared and displayed in school.

Dealing with Bullying Incidents:

In the first instance, please report any concerns to the class teacher. He/she will then:

- Listen to both sides of the 'problem' and establish if bullying is taking place
- Talk through the 'problem' so that all the children are clear that bullying has taken place (or not)
- If it is felt that bullying has not occurred or there is insufficient evidence they bullying has taken place then ensure action is taken to reassure and meet the needs of those concerned.
- Listen to other young people who may have observed the incident
- Record all conversations with both parties to effectively ensure communication
- Reassure and support the target, so they feel neither inadequate nor foolish
- Reinforce and model the school rules to promote positive behaviour
- Use weekly SEAL (Social and Emotional Aspects of Learning) circle times to discuss aspects of behaviour
- Follow steps to deal with bullying incidents, for example talking through why children are behaving this way, using structured play groups to encourage friendship and team work, offer support if they are trying to cope with being bullied themselves, ask the bully to face the victim to understand how it feels to be bullied
- Inform the target and the young person committing the bullying behaviours of the outcomes and actions taken
- Report the incident to the Headteacher who will inform the parents of all the children involved.
- Complete an incident form if bullying has occurred and pass to the Headteacher for analysis
- Ensure that the incident is reported on SIMS. (Schools Information Management System)

- Follow up any parental concerns by asking if the situation has remained resolved after a few weeks.
- Monitor the situation and review with all parties to ensure the behavior has stopped.
- Ensure that parents/carers of the young people are informed and kept up to date with any actions taken.
- Review the approach taken and take steps if any additional preventative measures need to be put in place.

Support and lunchtime staff will:

- Reinforce and model the school rules to promote positive behaviour
- Speak to the children involved separately
- Listen to each child
- Report all incidents of potential bullying to class teacher

We ask that children:

- Report any incidents of bullying that they see or know about
- Be a friend to the child being bullied
- Tell a parent or known adult what has happened / is happening (if outside of school)
- Follow the school rules to ensure that positive behavior is occurring

Strategies in place to promote positive play in the playground:

We have a variety of activities and strategies in place to help children engage and have fun with their friends during playtimes.

- Playground resources as appropriate are available to share
- Sports equipment is available to share
- Year 2 playground friends and playground monitors
- Two separate areas for play
- Whole school SEAL Programme
- Child friendly definition of bullying displayed around playground
- 'Buddy Bench' designated area for children to go to if they need someone to play with

Parents/carers:

Parents and children should be aware that bullying is not acceptable under any circumstances. Where aggressive or bullying behaviour is observed, class teachers will tell the parents/carers about their concerns. All parents/carers of pupils entering the school are asked to read and sign the St. Mary's Home School Agreement, which states what we expect from the home/school partnership.

We ask that if parents have any concerns they talk first to the class teacher who will have a good understanding of the different relationships between the children in the class. It is important that parents listen to their child and talk through with the class teacher what needs to happen next. If after speaking to the class teacher the parent feels the situation has not improved then an appointment with the Headteacher can be made.

For further information please see the Oxfordshire School Anti-bullying page www.oxfordshire.gov.uk/anti-bullying