



# ST MARY'S SCHOOL HAMPSTEAD

**Anti-Bullying POLICY**

**September 2019**

Reviewed September 2019  
Next Review Date: September 2020

## **MISSION STATEMENT**

St Mary's School seeks to provide an education firmly founded on Christ and the Catholic faith.

Spiritual and moral principles are nurtured in a way that is reflected in daily life.

Within a happy and caring environment and based on the recognition of the dignity and worth of every child, high standards are expected and pursued. Intellectual development is emphasised and fostered along with the pursuit of academic excellence.

St Mary's values the unique contribution of every child within the school community.

St Mary's aims to encourage an active partnership between home, school, parish and the wider community.

## **BACKGROUND**

It is a Government requirement that all schools have an anti-bullying policy. In 2003 Ofsted published *Bullying: effective action in secondary schools*. This was followed by DfES guidance for schools under two headings: *Don't Suffer in Silence* and *Bullying – A Charter for Action*. Following this the DCSF published a document entitled "*Safe to Learn – Embedding anti-bullying work in Schools.*" Recently the DfE guidance "*Preventing and tackling Bullying – Advice for school leaders, Staff and Governors,*" has been published. St Mary's school community has regard to all of the above guidance.

DfE guidance defines bullying as actions that are meant to be hurtful, and which happen on a regular basis. Bullying can be direct (either physical or verbal) or indirect (for example, being ignored or not spoken to). Cyber bullying may also take place through social websites, mobile phones, text messages, photographs and emails. Bullying can take many forms and may occur due to a person's race, religion, culture, sex, sexual preferences, special educational needs and/or disability.

Bullying can take place among children, staff and parents.

## **AIMS AND OBJECTIVES**

At St Mary's School, our community is based upon respect, good manners and fair play. We are committed to providing a safe and caring environment that is free from disruption, violence and any form of harassment so that every one of our pupils can develop his/ her full potential. We expect our pupils to treat members of staff with courtesy and co-operation so that they can learn in a relaxed, but orderly, atmosphere. All pupils should care for and support each other.

St Mary's School prides itself on its respect and mutual tolerance. Parents/ guardians have an important role in supporting St Mary's School in maintaining high standards of behaviour. It is essential that school and homes have consistent expectations of behaviour and that they co-operate closely together.

This policy is available to parents of pupils and prospective pupils on our website and on request. It is also communicated to all staff and pupils.

Bullying, harassment, victimisation and discrimination will not be tolerated. We treat all our pupils and their parents fairly and with consideration and we expect them to respect the staff, the school and each other, in return. All forms of bullying are unacceptable at our school and any instances will be recorded and, where appropriate, will result in disciplinary action. This policy applies to all pupils in the school including those in the Early Years Foundation Stage/Nursery

### **DEFINITION OF BULLYING**

Bullying can be defined as "behaviour by an individual or group, repeated over time, that intentionally hurts another individual or group either physically or emotionally" (Guidance on Preventing and Tackling Bullying, Department for Education)

Put another way, bullying is the intentional hurting, harming or humiliating of another person by physical (including any threat of or use of violence of any kind), sexual, verbal (including via email, social media and SMS or other instant messages), and emotional (including by excluding, being sarcastic, name-calling, tormenting or spreading malicious rumours) means. It can involve manipulating a third party to tease or torment someone, or actions that fall short of direct participation, where someone encourages others to bully, or joins in with laughing at a victim. Bullying is often hidden and subtle. It can also be overt and intimidatory.

Bullying may involve actions or comments that are sexual or sexist, homophobic, racist, which focus on religion or cultural or family background, special educational needs, disabilities or physical attributes (such as hair colour or body shape). It may also be unpleasant in other ways.

Bullying can happen anywhere and at any time and can involve anyone - pupils, other young people, staff and parents.

### **DEFINITION OF CYBERBULLYING**

Cyberbullying can be defined as "the use of information and communication technologies to support deliberate, repeated, and hostile behaviour by an individual or group that is intended to harm others" (Belsey, <http://www.cyberbullying.org/>). It is an aggressive, intentional act carried out repeatedly over time, often against a victim who cannot easily defend himself/ herself.

Cyber-bullying could involve communications by various electronic media, including for example:

- Texts, instant messages or calls on mobile phones;
- The use of mobile phone camera images to cause distress, fear or humiliation;
- Posting threatening, abusive, offensive or humiliating material or comments on websites (including blogs, personal websites and social networking sites such as Facebook, Instagram, Twitter or YouTube);
- Using e-mail to message others in a threatening or abusive manner; or
- Hijacking/ cloning e-mail accounts.

### **SIGNS OF BULLYING**

Changes in behaviour that may indicate that a pupil is being bullied include:

- Unwillingness to return to school;
- Displays of excessive anxiety, becoming withdrawn or unusually quiet;
- Failure to produce work, or producing unusually poor work, or work that appears to have been copied, interfered with or spoilt by others;
- Books, bags, money and other belongings suddenly go "missing", or are damaged;
- Change to established habits (e.g. giving up music lessons, change to accent or vocabulary);
- Diminished levels of self confidence
- Frequent visits to the Medical Room with symptoms which may relate to stress or anxiety, such as stomach pains or headaches;

- Unexplained cuts and bruises;
- Frequent absence, erratic attendance or late arrival to class;
- Choosing the company of adults rather than peers;
- Displaying repressed body language and poor eye contact;
- Difficulty in sleeping or experiencing nightmares; or
- Talking of suicide or running away from home or school.

Although there may be other causes of some of the above symptoms, a repetition or combination of these possible signs of bullying should be investigated by parents and teachers and reported/ recorded as appropriate

### **BULLYING - PREVENTATIVE MEASURES**

We take the following preventative measures in order to ensure that bullying does not become a problem which is associated with St Mary's School

#### Pupils

- All new pupils are briefed thoroughly on the school's expected standards of behaviour. They are told what to do if they encounter bullying. We guarantee that those who report bullying in good faith will not be punished and will be supported;
- We use appropriate assemblies to explain the school policy on bullying. Our PSHCE programme is structured to give pupils an awareness of their social and moral responsibilities as they progress through the school. The programme is structured to enforce messages about community involvement and taking care of each other;
- Other lessons, particularly RS, English and Drama highlight the issue of bullying and reinforce this message by developing social skills and by teaching moral and spiritual values that show bullying to be unacceptable;
- All our pupils are encouraged to tell a member of staff at once if they know or suspect that bullying is taking place;

### **CYBERBULLYING - PREVENTATIVE MEASURES**

For the prevention of cyber-bullying, in addition to the measures described above, St Mary's School:

- Expects all pupils to adhere to its policy for the safe use of the internet/ E-Safety Policy. Certain sites are blocked by our filtering system and our IT Department monitors pupils' use;
- May impose disciplinary sanctions for the misuse, or attempted misuse, of the internet;
- Issues all pupils with their own personal school email address. Access to all social media sites and personal email sites such as "hotmail" is not allowed from school computers/ tablets inside school;
- Offers guidance on the safe use of social networking sites and cyberbullying in PSHCE lessons, which covers blocking, removing contacts from "friend" lists and sharing personal data;
- Offers guidance on keeping names, addresses, passwords, mobile phone numbers and other personal details safe;
- Does not allow the use of mobile phones in classrooms, public areas of the school, or where they may cause annoyance to others

## **THE ROLE OF GOVERNORS**

The Governing Body supports the Headmistress in all attempts to eliminate bullying from our school. The Governing Body will not condone any form of bullying at St Mary's School. Any incidents of bullying that do occur will be taken seriously and dealt with appropriately.

The Governing Body, through the Education and Staffing Sub Committee, monitors incidents of bullying that do occur and reviews the effectiveness of this policy annually. The Governing Body requires the Headmistress to keep accurate records of all incidents of bullying and to report to the governors, on request, the effectiveness of school anti-bullying strategies.

A parent who is dissatisfied with the way the school has dealt with an alleged incident of bullying may request that the Governing Body, through the Chair of Governors look into the matter. In all cases the Governing Body notifies the Headmistress, requests she conducts an investigation into the case and reports back to a named representative of the Governing Body. The Governing Body, through the Chair of Governors, reports back to the parent as soon as is possible.

## **THE ROLE OF THE HEADMISTRESS**

It is the responsibility of the Headmistress 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 Headmistress reports to the Education & Staffing Committee about the effectiveness of the anti-bullying policy on request.

The Headmistress ensures that all children know that bullying is wrong and that it is unacceptable behaviour at St Mary's School. The Headmistress draws the attention of children to this fact at appropriate times. For example, should an incident occur, the Headmistress may decide to use an assembly as the forum in which to discuss with other children why this behaviour was wrong, and what the consequences might be for the child who has been bullying. Other educational elements such as projects, drama, stories, literature, historical events and current affairs may be used to address bullying and related issues.

The Headmistress ensures that all staff undertake sufficient training to equip them to identify and deal appropriately with all incidents of bullying.

The Headmistress 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.

Headteachers have a specific statutory power to discipline pupils for poor behaviour outside of the school premises. Section 89(5) of the Education and Inspections Act 2006 gives head teachers the power to regulate pupils' conduct when they are not on school premises and are not under the lawful control or charge of a member of school staff. This can relate to any bullying incidents occurring anywhere off the school premises, such as on school or public transport, outside the local shops, or in a town or village centre.

Where bullying outside school is reported to school staff, it should be investigated and acted on. The Headmistress will, in consultation with the Governing Body, 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.

## **THE ROLE OF TEACHERS AND SUPPORT STAFF**

All staff at St Mary's School take all forms of bullying seriously and seek to prevent it from taking place.

Teachers keep their own records of all incidents of bullying that happen in their class and the action taken by them to deal with it effectively. Should teachers witness an act of bullying, they may investigate it appropriately or refer it directly to the Headmistress. Teachers and support staff do all they can to support the child who is being bullied. If a child is being bullied over a period of time, then, after consultation with the Headmistress, the teacher informs the child's parents.

There is an Anti-bullying Logbook in which staff record all incidents of bullying that occur both in and out of class. This allows patterns of bullying to be identified. Any adult who witnesses an act of bullying is required to record it in the logbook. The Logbook is monitored by the Headmistress.

When any bullying is taking place between members of a class, the teacher will deal with the issue immediately. This may involve counselling and support for the victim of the bullying, and punishment for the child who has carried out the bullying. Time is spent talking to the child who has bullied: explaining why his/her action was wrong, and that child is encouraged to change his/her behaviour in future. If a child is repeatedly involved in bullying other children, the Headmistress is informed. The child's parents may be invited into the school to discuss the situation. Persistent offenders or those involved in perpetrating severe bullying may be excluded from activities, excluded from school for a fixed period or asked to leave the school permanently. At all times the procedures and sanctions laid out in the school's Behaviour and Discipline Policy are taken into consideration to ensure that all involved receive clear and consistent messages about the high expectations of behaviour at St Mary's School.

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. Records of this training are kept by the Deputy Head and the Key Stage 1 and Early Years Leader.

Teachers use a range of methods to help prevent bullying and to establish a climate of trust and respect for all. They use drama, role-play, stories, assemblies, projects, reference to historical events and current affairs etc., within the formal curriculum, to help pupils understand the feelings of bullied children, and to practise the restraint required to avoid lapsing into bullying behaviour. Circle time is used to praise, reward and celebrate the success of all children, and thus to help create a positive atmosphere. The PSHCE curriculum contains a topic aimed at raising awareness of bullying issues and providing children with strategies for dealing with all forms of bullying. This is taught annually. The school aims for this topic to coincide with National Anti-Bullying week.

## **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 Headmistress. If they remain dissatisfied, they should follow the school's Complaints Procedure.

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, and if the bullying continues, they must keep on letting people know.

Pupils are encouraged to tell anybody they trust if they see someone else being bullied or they think they see this occurring.

Pupils are given strategies to use to prevent bullying and to deal with bullying if it does occur. The school supports Anti-Bullying week every year and runs Anti-Bullying assemblies in conjunction with this. Anti-Bullying lessons form part of the PSHCE curriculum every year.

Pupils are invited to tell us their views about a range of school issues, including bullying, in regular pupil questionnaires.

Pupils can talk to a trusted adult at any time, or record their concerns in writing and put them in the class comments box.

## **PROCEDURES FOR DEALING WITH REPORTED BULLYING**

St Mary's School ensures that all instances of or concerns about bullying and cyberbullying on and away from school premises are easy to report and that they are recorded properly.

Records of instances of bullying and allegations of bullying will be kept in order to enable the school to identify patterns of behaviour and to evaluate the effectiveness of our anti-bullying policy.

If an incident of bullying is reported, the following procedures will be adopted:

- The member of staff to whom it was reported, or who first discovers the situation, will control the situation, reassure and support the pupils involved;
- He/she will inform an appropriate member of the pastoral team as soon as possible;
- The victim will be interviewed on his/ her own (or, if appropriate, with a suitable person present for support) and asked to write an account of events;
- The alleged bully/ bullies, and all others who were involved, will immediately be interviewed individually (or, if appropriate, with a suitable person present for support) and asked to write an account of events;
- The incident should be recorded on a school incident form and signed and dated before it is given to the Deputy Head who is responsible for keeping all records of bullying and other serious disciplinary offences, securely in a locked cabinet in his/ her office. If it is not practicable to use the form, the incident must still be written down, signed and dated, and held securely by the Deputy Head;
- The Deputy Head will inform the tutors, of both the bully/ bullies and the victim[s] as soon as possible. In very serious incidents, the Headmistress should be informed;
- The victim will be interviewed again at a later stage by a member of the pastoral team, separately from the alleged perpetrator. He/ she will be offered support to develop a strategy to help him or herself. It will be made clear to him/ her why revenge or retaliation is inappropriate;
- The alleged bully will be interviewed again at a later stage by a member of the pastoral team, separately from the victim, and it will be made clear why his/ her behaviour was inappropriate and caused distress. He/ she will be offered guidance on modifying his or her behaviour. The school's Behaviour Management Policy may also be invoked. Sanctions under the Behaviour Management Policy might include, for example, detention, withdrawal of privileges or suspension from school. The school may exclude a pupil, either temporarily or permanently, in cases of severe or persistent bullying or in the event that the support put in place for the bully does not result in the modification of behaviour to an acceptable level.

- The parents/ guardians of all parties will be informed and may be invited into school to discuss the matter. Their support will be sought;
- A way forward, including where appropriate disciplinary sanctions and counselling, should be determined, and where possible agreed with all parties. This should recognise that suitable support is needed both for pupils who are being bullied and for pupils who bully others, as well as dealing with disciplinary measures in accordance with the school's Behaviour Management Policy if appropriate;
- As part of this process, a meeting involving all the parties, with close staff supervision, may be convened to help develop a strategy which enables all concerned to close the episode;
- A monitoring and review strategy will be put in place and put on record;
- In very serious cases, and only after the Head Master/ Mistress has been involved, it may be necessary to make a report to the Police or to Social Services. However, in many cases it will be possible to resolve such issues internally under this policy and the school's Behaviour Management Policy.

### **NURSERY/EYFS CHILDREN**

Even the youngest children at St Mary's School are encouraged to behave towards each other with kindness and consideration. They are encouraged to learn to look after their own possessions and to respect others' possessions. We expect them to be honest, helpful and polite, and to work hard and to listen to others. They should respect everyone and learn to value differences and diversity. The Head of EYFS, is in charge of the management of behaviour in the Nursery Department.

We explain to children why some forms of behaviour are unacceptable and hurtful to others. We rarely need to impose sanctions in the Nursery Department; but sometimes we may remove a treat for hurtful behaviour. Occasionally, a child may be sent to see the Head of EYFS, who will explain the inappropriateness of a particular action; but such instances are rare.

Parents are always informed when any sanction or reproof is needed, and in cases of repeated instances of hurtful or inappropriate behaviour, they will be invited into the school to discuss the situation with their child's teacher to agree a joint way of handling the difficulty.

### **COMPLAINTS PROCEDURE**

Parents and pupils are encouraged to use our Complaints Procedure (which is published on our website) if they feel that any concerns about bullying (or anything else) are not being addressed properly. [Parents of EYES children should be aware that they have the right to refer a complaint directly to Ofsted, if they are unhappy with the way in which their complaint has been handled (The Complaints Procedure explains how to complain to Ofsted).]

### **MONITORING AND REVIEW**

This policy is monitored on a day-to-day basis by the Headmistress, who reports to governors in the Education and Staffing Committee on request, about the effectiveness of the policy.

This anti-bullying policy is the governors' responsibility, and they review its effectiveness on a regular basis. They do this by examining the school's anti-bullying logbook, where incidents of bullying are recorded, and by discussion with the Headmistress. Governors analyse information for patterns of people, places or groups. They look out in particular for racist bullying, religious bullying, cultural bullying, sexual/sexist bullying, homophobic bullying, cyber bullying or bullying directed at children with disabilities or special educational needs.

This policy will be reviewed in two years, or earlier if necessary. It should be read in conjunction with the schools Behaviour and Discipline Policy